

# **UGANDA CONSERVE BIODIVERSITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (COBS) SUPPORT PROJECT**

## **Project Final Evaluation**

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOP	Annual operation plan (for a protected area)
APE	Action Program for the Environment
ARD–COBS	ARD–COBS Support Project
BINP	Bwindi Impenetrable National Park
BoT	Board of Trustees
CA	Cooperative Agreement
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer (of District)
CBO	Community-based organization
CEMT	Center for Environmental Management Training
COBS	Conserve Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (USAID SO2 Program)
CoP	Chief of Party
CPIs	Community Protected Area Institutions
DDP	District Development Plan
DEAP	District environment action plan
DEO	District Environment Officer
DTF	District task force
EA/EIA	Environmental assessment/Environmental impact assessment
EAP	Environment action plan
ECOTRUST	Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda
EIS	Environmental impact statement
ELU	Environment Liaison Unit
ENR	Environment and natural resources
EPED	Environmental Planning and Economic Development ((Project)
EPTA	Environmental Planing Technical Advisor
GMP	General management plan (for a PA)
GMU	Grant Management Unit
GoU	Government of the Republic of Uganda
ICDC	Integrated Conservation and Development Coordinator (CARE)
IQC	Indefinite Quantity Contract
IT	Information technology
IUCN	World Conservation Union
KCCL	Kasese Cobalt Company Limited
LEC	Local Environment Committee
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFCA	Murchison Falls Conservation Area
MGNP	M'gahinga Gorilla National Park
NAADS	National Agricultural Advisory Service
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NGO	Nongovernmental organization
PA	Protected area
PEAP	Parish environment action plan
PFE	Project final evaluation
PIE	Public information and education
PMA	Plan for the Modernization of Africa
PMP	Performance monitoring plan
QEPA	Queen Elizabeth Protected Area

## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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Q“n”	“nth” Quarter of ARD–COBS Implementation [Q5 = 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter of 2001]
RM	Results Module
RMNP	Rwenzori Mountain National Park
SEAP	Subcounty environment action plan
SO	Strategic Objective (as in SO2 of USAID’s Uganda Program)
SoW	Statement of Work
TA	Technical Advisor
TO	Task Order
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UWA	Uganda Wildlife Authority
UWAPU	UWA Planning Unit
WR	Wildlife Reserve

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## **PREFACE**

The Uganda Conserve Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (COBS) program continues United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assistance to the Government of the Republic of Uganda (GoU) in biodiversity conservation and environmental management. COBS represents the second strategic objective (SO2) of the USAID Mission to Uganda.

Several aspects of COBS, including the subject of this document, are implemented by ARD, Inc. (ARD) as the “COBS Support Project” under a 36-month institutional contract issued on 30 September 1999. This contract is Task Order No. 800 under the umbrella USAID–ARD Biodiversity and Sustainable Forestry Indefinite Quantity Contract OUT-LAG-I-800-99-00013-00. A Task Order (TO) modification was completed in January 2001, which refocused the Project Statement of Work, and incorporated a budget reduction.

The TO covers support to the Uganda Wildlife Authority, the National Environment Management Authority, administrative Districts and other government and nongovernment bodies in:

- Protected areas (PA) planning and management.
- District environmental planning and management.
- Capacity-building in environmental assessment and impact assessment.
- Intersectoral coordination for effective environmental management.
- Other support activities for biodiversity conservation to be defined as needed.
- Program management and coordination.

These elements are integrated through a landscape approach to environmental management in critical ecosystems, and by the theme of biodiversity conservation in and around PAs, linked to potential economic development in local communities.

The TO is implemented by a Project Management Unit based in Kampala, supported by ARD’s head office in Burlington, Vermont. CARE–International is the major subcontractor to ARD under the TO, providing staffing and support to a field-based team through its Uganda country office. The TO provides funding for an independent external review, the results of which are presented in this Project final evaluation document.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Uganda Conserve Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (COBS) Project is a collaborative effort of the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the United States Agency for International Development that is broadly assisted through a number of development activities and projects. The COBS Support Project provides core institutional support to the program through a technical support contract administered by ARD, Inc., which in turn sub-contracted with CARE-Uganda to help implement especially field-based activity in four rural Districts. This document reports the results of a Project Final Evaluation of the three-year \$5.2 million undertaking that began in September 1999 and ended September 30 2002.

The COBS Support Project strengthened the capacity of Ugandan organizations carrying out activities to achieve the collaborative program's strategic objective (SO2): *Critical ecosystems conserved to sustain biodiversity and to enhance benefits to society*. The effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the effort depended primarily on results of long- and short-term technical assistance, training and capacity-building, and limited logistical and material support to a diverse set of Ugandan government and nongovernmental organizations concerned with improving conservation and environmental management. The evaluation addresses four major questions:

- What did the Project achieve?
- What did it fail to achieve?
- What is the impact and sustainability of its achievements?
- What are the key lessons that can be built on?

The latter question is of particular concern to USAID's new Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP), which seeks to integrate conservation concerns within an overall objective of expanded *sustainable economic opportunities for rural sector growth*.

### What Was Achieved?

Although the field focus was confined to the Western part of the country, the institutional challenges and scope were national. The limited budget encouraged USAID and ARD-COBS to adopt an indirect strategy of mobilizing personnel and resources within the key beneficiary organizations. The Project was largely successful in this regard and, in some areas, remarkable results were achieved. Table E1 summarizes key institutional changes, ongoing status, and possible future impacts of COBS Support Project activities.

The two major areas of support for planning and plan implementation focused on (1) redefining the management paradigm for the PA System under the Uganda Wildlife Authority, and (2) integrating environmental concerns into local government planning and development programs through improving and mainstreaming the District environment action plan (DEAP) process.

**Table E1. Summary Matrix of COBS Support Project Results and Impacts**

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Ongoing Status and Impact</b>	<b>Potential Future Impact</b>
Capacity for National Park and PA planning institutionalized	COBS staff absorbed into UWA; plans being developed autonomously. UWA committed to the process.	Reduction in dependence and role of donors increases likelihood of plans being used successfully.
PA planning process and dynamic model refined and adopted	Two plans finalized under new general management plan system. Planning manual being updated. Improvements continuing despite project ending.	Plans are establishing adequate technical foundation for longer term management and protection of resources. Donor comfort level will increase improving funding climate.
Process for ensuring PA plan implementation put into place	Annual operation plans incorporated at all levels and beginning to rationalize management decision-making. Limited COBS support for implementation integrated into new approach. PA managers identifying projects and seeking funding. Headquarters initiated system-wide monitoring and oversight.	Sound technical plans, responsive programming, and oversight can be expected to stabilize PA boundaries, reduce flagrant abuses, and shift concerns to a higher level. Stable political context would help attract tourism revenues that could further drive the process.
Commitment to environmental planning in rural landscapes surrounding areas of critical biodiversity enhanced and institutionalized through the EAP process.	DEAPs approved in four Districts and sub-units in southwestern Uganda. Planning manuals and methodologies approved and adopted for Districts and lower levels. Participatory process involves lower level political institutions and community leaders. Process is being adopted by other sectors and integrated into overall local planning process and has become model for environmental planning nationwide.	Participatory process created a basis for dialogue and negotiation between government and civil society CBOs and NGOs. It establishes a means for local government to attract resources toward environmentally sustainable development activities. Plans offer a formal channel to link with private sector incentives for programs like those proposed under SO7; local awareness and enthusiasm can contribute to adoption of improved natural resource management practices that are offer financial benefits.
Implementation of activities in support of plans underway at local levels.	Pilot programs initiated with direct support. Other COBS and non-COBS (e.g. Africare, CARE DTC) projects building on accomplishments to implement activities supporting plans. Local by-laws are being developed and revised. Fund-raising tools, materials and training to support plan implementation. Ongoing support continued under ECOTRUST cooperative agreement.	Continued movement toward decentralized governance and finance, coupled with the mainstreaming of the participatory planning model suggest that the process can be strengthened, integrated and applied more widely.
Procedures for environmental assessment and review were improved and adopted.	NEMA is distributing EA manual that incorporated project contributions. Environment and environmental review less isolated from other sectors at District level.	New manuals and training modules give NEMA means to affect other ministries and sectors. Future impact depends on further support to tie together elements of assessment, reporting and monitoring system that ARD-COBS strengthened.
Local commitment to environmental review increased	Comprehensive awareness training coupled with institutional changes producing initial set of impact studies. Initial results at field level indicate populations are playing an active role.	Sustainable awareness raising and educational activities respond to effective ongoing campaigns but project framework is not sustainable without a long term institutional base for such programs. Without this project impact can be expected to decline over time.
ECOTRUST established as viable local conservation grant-making organization	Qualified personnel, financial and administrative systems, and initial USAID cooperative grant in place. Initial grants producing promising examples of field level success. Funding is not diversified and organization is vulnerable to characterization as USAID project.	Future impact limited by field-level minimal presence of CBO/NGOs, suggesting need for local organizational capacity-building. Achieving organizational mission will require diversified funding without which ECOTRUST will likely play only a role as an SO7 service provider.

The evaluation concludes that COBS Support made instrumental contributions that helped UWA adopt system-wide changes that over time will halt encroachment into PAs, improve ecosystem health, and restore wildlife populations. The evaluation also concludes that the COBS Support Project interventions engaged District, Subcounty, and Parish local government structures and involved council members and local populations to define a state-of-the-art DEAP approach that has been adopted as the national standard and emulated, with varying success, in non-COBS Districts in other areas of the country. The approach, moreover, has been appreciated by local government officials and it is serving as a model for planning in other sectors as well as facilitating the incorporation of environmental concerns into a number of other annual sectoral plans, especially in forestry and agriculture. The participatory process involving local populations and Subdistrict institutions has paved the way for implementation of the plans and for the type of partnerships envisioned under SO7. Preliminary results from COBS pilot Project actions support this conclusion.

The Project also provided support upon request to the USAID Mission toward achievement of the COBS strategic objective and its integration with the economic growth SO in crafting the ISP's new SO7. The evaluation concludes that this provision for flexibility and mobilization on demand generally functioned as intended. It was called on mostly to assist the nascent Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda. ECOTRUST, as a COBS SO institution, underwent a period of prolonged uncertainty in its transformation from USAID/COBS Grants Management Unit to autonomous Ugandan conservation NGO. COBS Support Project provided essential technical, managerial, and organizational development support, without which ECOTRUST might not have survived to meet the next level of challenges in its effort to achieve long-term sustainability as a national environment, conservation, and sustainable development grant-making body.

### **What Was Not Achieved?**

In an attempt to enhance tangible impact, COBS Support Project modifications concentrated efforts geographically and emphasized transitioning from planning to plan implementation for both PAs and the surrounding rural landscapes. As a three-year effort, actual plan implementation was limited and quite late. Although some continuity will be ensured by carrying forward certain field activities through other USAID grants, the beneficiaries of the improved planning process would have further profited from an earlier start and/or more time for implementation.

The project was unable to achieve parallel accomplishments in its efforts to institutionalize environmental assessment, review, and management. From the outset, USAID's strategic refocusing of COBS meant that the project's original results module, directed to establishing a series of "Environmental Liaison Units" within national level "lead agencies," was dropped. These units were to have strengthened the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) in its effort to have the environmental management provisions of the NES implemented. These units were closely tied to the EA/EIA goals and thus affected related Project implementation. Efforts at the national level failed to gain traction and were scaled back following a reduction in the Project's budget. Training, awareness, and capacity-building at the field level were well received, but the evaluation concludes that these accomplishments have not been securely institutionalized. Although the project achieved some success in training District officials and local

populations and producing adopted guidelines for one sector, the country is still without a system of certification for practitioners, of audit and compliance, and of incorporation of environmental measures across multiple sectors.

ARD's "landscape approach" and the intended synergies sought through geographic concentration were realized only to a limited degree. This was in part due to UWA insistence, that the contractor's primary PA effort be directed to the outlying Murchison Falls National Park, thus diffusing the intention of bring Districts and neighboring PA management into a common conceptual and planning frame of reference.

Sustainability of outreach programs was not achieved, since they lack an institutional home beyond the Project. The Project achieved some success in testing and applying innovative participatory approaches in its environmental awareness and management and its public information and education campaigns, but their effect will be substantial only if institutionalized and replicated.

### **What Is the Impact and Sustainability of the COBS Support Project Achievements?**

The evaluation assessed sustainability and impact in terms of beneficiary institutions' abilities to carry forward with the necessary financial and human resources to develop and implement plans capable of orchestrating environmentally positive changes in people's behaviors and, hence, in protecting critical ecosystems and the biodiversity they contain.

The team found that the UWA has committed to perennially funding a fully staffed planning unit, which the evaluation argues is already autonomously applying the system of general management planning that it jointly developed with COBS support. The system has been adopted not only for COBS's PAs, but for the country's entire PA system. As tourism and UWA revenues increase over time, the unit can be expected to achieve more independence from donor program support. Also with the project's support, UWA adopted system-wide use of annual operation plans. This reinforces sustainability by increasing UWA's efficiency in using human and material resources. Moreover, annual planning gives the general plans flexibility to expand or contract on the basis of available funds.

Through NEMA, COBS Support Project engaged local government and its development and civil society partners to achieve comprehensive planning and, to a large extent, mainstreaming of environmental concerns in the COBS target Districts of southwestern Uganda. It is clear that the human resources, both political and technical, within Districts, Subcounties, and Parishes have embraced a participatory process that connects environment with the overall move toward decentralization in the country. It is difficult for the team to assess the financial sustainability of the EAP process since it is so integrally bound with larger issues of District and local finance; however, financial resources available to Districts are significant and varied. Looking forward, the integration of environment into the overall District development plans bodes well for sustained financing for program implementation and thus to environmental conservation practices—even in the heavily populated portions of the region.

**What Are the “Lessons Learned”?**

- *Overall Program coordination is critical to success.* For effective partnership and collaboration, institutional cultures need to be analyzed and any negative implications dealt with early in the partnership. Monitoring coordination structures such as an extended SO team should be ensured. A lack of clarity in the Project’s mandate created delays and uncertainty that could have been avoided by better communication and a formalized structure of setting and affirming operating parameters for the Project. Field activities under SO7 will likely involve groupings of distinct projects, government and nongovernment partners, providers of technology or services, and entrepreneurs. This complexity suggests that coordinating structures at several levels will be need to be developed. Clear contractual responsibilities and approved monitoring plans should underlie efforts to achieve interinstitutional synergies.
- *Focusing on opportunities and not constraints* contributed immensely to the Project’s level of success. In particular, vision-based planning led to rapid and widespread stakeholder buy-in. Visioning was used at the subregional level to instill a sense of positive outcome toward which actors saw the landscape evolving at the conclusion of successful implementation. Actions then become steps toward this endpoint. SO7 will grapple with similar challenges of local land use such as erosion and watershed degradation. Such exercises can be tailored to multiple levels—from farmer and village organizations to national strategic and policy efforts.
- *Building the institutions is key to long-term success.* COBS focused on strengthening government institutions and planning. With the attention given to achieving higher level (biophysical and income) results, institutional development is often seen as an intermediate process, and is given reduced attention in development efforts. COBS Support Project demonstrated the importance of creating an enabling institutional environment. It showed that by focusing on core functions, significant change can be engendered with limited resources and in a relatively short period of time. Sustainable capacity-building activities for environment management are difficult to assess, but absent enabling policy, regulatory, and technical support institutions, private sector initiatives may not achieve intended conservation objectives. SO7 appears to make limited provision for support to government despite recognizing the important residual role that only government institutions can play. COBS Support Project experience would suggest that funding government participation in the natural resource enterprises and partnerships can both enhance success and build on the recently developed capacities.
- *Avoiding parallel structures helps transfer ownership and makes a real difference.* COBS Support Project’s integrating of project activities into District technical structures can help shield Project facilities and resources from pressures for favors by politicians, and prevent them from disappearing with termination of a project. The buy-in and ownership of PA and local government partners under COBS is a direct outgrowth of encouraging these institutions to directly implement the program and equipping them with the necessary justifiable resources. As SO7 puts structures into place, there is a real risk that private extension, NGO development, CBO/farmer organizational capacity-building, and technical implementers will create a labyrinth of organizational complexity in the field. Widespread vesting in the District planning and oversight can both reduce confusion of responsibility and enhance sustainability.

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## SECTION 1.0

### INTRODUCTION

The Uganda Conserve Biodiversity for Sustainable Development (COBS) Project is a collaborative effort of the Government of the Republic of Uganda (GoU) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Implementation of the program is anchored in a core support project, the COBS Support Project. The project is funded through a Task Order (TO) under the USAID Biodiversity and Sustainable Forestry (BIOFOR) Indefinite Quantity Contract OUT-LAG-I-800-99-00013-00.<sup>1</sup> The technical support contract is administered by ARD, Inc., which subcontracted with CARE-Uganda to help especially with field-based activity in four rural Districts. ARD and CARE unified their efforts under a central Program Management Unit (PMU). The Project-funded evaluation team worked closely with the PMU to coordinate and facilitate its activities; however, the evaluation represents a comprehensive, independent, external assessment of the Project achievements.

The COBS Support Project is in its final close-out phase, and the recently adopted USAID Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP), 2002–2007, has replaced the original strategic objective (SO) that the Project supported. COBS Support Project was implemented under the previous strategic plan and was the primary mechanism to achieve SO2—*Critical ecosystems conserved to sustain biodiversity and to enhance benefits to society*. During the implementation of COBS, USAID’s strategic focus shifted from institutional capacity-development toward a more private sector growth and poverty alleviation strategy. Many of the prior SO2 (and SO1) results have been subsumed under the current strategic plan’s SO7—*Expanded sustainable economic opportunities for rural sector growth*.

This report is organized around the five results modules (RMs) that comprise the statement of work (SoW) of the COBS Support Project. Section 2.0 discusses the findings and analysis related to the management of biodiversity in protected areas (PAs); Section 3.0 treats the environmental planning and management in biodiverse landscapes and Districts; Section 4.0 relates to capacity-building and institutional support; Section 5.0 presents results for the special biodiversity support activities; and finally, Section 6.0 reviews results related to coordination and administration. Section 7.0 analyzed project results from the perspective of sustainability. The final section, Section 8.0, summarizes lessons learned. The sections reporting on the core RMs (Sections 2.0–4.0) provide specific detail; but for the reader wishing a quick overview, each section summarizes outputs in an overview table near the top. Sections 7.0 and 8.0, when coupled with the Executive Summary and the RM summary tables, provide a comprehensive overview of the Project, from the evaluation team’s perspective.

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<sup>1</sup>COBS Support Project is frequently referred to as the “ARD–COBS Project,” a result of the Chief of Party’s (CoP) effort to distinguish the Project from other COBS (SO2) activities. As per the PFE SoW, both Project names are used in this document; however, one should recognize that ARD’s partner, CARE-Uganda, played an integral role in Project implementation, particularly for decentralized environmental action planning. Although the Project carries the name of the SO, many other USAID-funded activities (ICRAF/AFRENA, ECOTRUST Cooperative Agreement, Africare, AWF) contributed to achievement of the COBS SO2.

## **I.1 COBS SUPPORT PROJECT GOALS**

The overall thrust of the COBS Support Project aimed to build institutional capacity behind the National environment action plan (NEAP) and the National Environmental Statute (NES), which codified Uganda's commitment to a new set of environmental goals and policies. The contract broke this overall objective into a set of discrete RMs corresponding to the spectrum of key GoU actors in the area of environment and natural resources (E/NR) management. Subsequent to substantive modification of the original TO, the Project addressed:

- Biodiversity conservation in PAs by increasing the Uganda Wildlife Authority's (UWA) capabilities to develop and implement general management plans (GMPs) in selected PAs (RM1).
- Environmental planning and management outside PAs ("biodiverse landscapes/Districts") by increasing the capacity of selected Districts to develop and implement District environment action plans (DEAPs) as an integral part of District-level development planning and implementation (RM2).
- Capacity-building and institutional support for environmental assessment (EA) and environmental review through (1) mainstreaming EA, review, and monitoring in selected Districts and (2) increasing capacity, effectiveness, and integration of EA/EIA (environmental impact assessment (EIA) training and education delivery within District and national management agendas (RM3).

In addition to these three core results modules, the TO included flexible, as-needed provision for "technical and program support to activities that support the SO2 Program" that were not otherwise covered (RM4). This RM was primarily used for the institutional strengthening of Uganda's Environmental Conservation Trust (ECOTRUST). A final module addressed coordination and administration of the activity (RM5).

## **I.2 EVALUATION APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

The evaluation pays particular attention to documenting best practices and lessons learned and interpreting these with respect to COBS SO2 activities that might be built on under SO7 of the new USAID strategy. The evaluation approach follows current USAID guidance in the sense that the team views evaluation as a collaborative exercise intended to enhance the effectiveness of program implementation by responding to specific management needs. The evaluation, therefore, (1) documents achievements and (2) documents shortcomings against expectations reflected in contracts, work plans, and other programmatic documents; (3) examines evidence of impact and sustainability primarily to the degree that they create an enabling institutional environment for biodiversity conservation; and (4) frames lessons learned from the ongoing COBS support in terms of the strategic refocusing under the new SO7, which shifts focus to economic growth but still includes environment.

The COBS Support Project has been a comprehensive institutional support Project and has addressed capacity issues particularly for improved planning and plan implementation in a number of mostly government organizations. It has done so, in many cases, using partnerships and other indirect means. The team used a range of methods to collect the necessary information to accomplish the evaluation purposes.

Week One consisted of reviewing key documents to identify issues, tasking assignments, establishing a schedule and field itinerary (see box), and holding a series of initial interviews with the key COBS staff, partners, and USAID. This was followed by field visits to the southwestern Districts and PAs. The team incorporated the discussion methodology (developed by the Institute for Cultural Affairs) to guide information gathering. The process was iterative and built an increasingly detailed understanding of key Project activities and results. Key informant and group interviews, field visits, “outsider” perspectives, direct observation, and secondary source material all contributed to an increasingly complete composite for each of the key areas of Project activity and thus of assessment. This combination of multiple sources enabled the team to triangulate findings that support the PFE’s conclusions, recommendations, and lessons learned. Through formal and informal information-sharing, we attempt to better incorporate the diverse perspectives of the Project’s multiple stakeholders. As the period of data collection ended, the team held a structured consensus-building retreat to validate a single united evaluation perspective, identify information gaps, and clarify areas of ambiguity.

<b>Overall Evaluation Schedule</b>	
July 30–Aug. 3	Team Planning Meeting Introductory interviews with key institutions Document review and preparation of Evaluation Work plan Preparation of Field visit
Aug. 4–11	Field visit to Southwestern Uganda (see detailed schedule)
Aug. 12–17	Follow-up interviews with implementation partners Refinement of writing assignments/drafting of findings Internal team consensus building retreat
Aug. 19–27	Preparation of initial draft report Preparation and presentation of findings Refinement of draft report based on written and oral feedback Presentation of draft report
Aug. 28–Sep. 18	Review and Completion of Final Evaluation document

### **1.3 THE EVALUATION TEAM**

The PFE team consisted of three individuals with a breadth of overlapping experience in USAID performance monitoring and evaluation (M&E), biodiversity, and environmental and natural resource management (ENRM) analysis, participatory planning, and knowledge of Uganda’s experience in these areas.

- *Dr. Frederick Sowers* led the three-person team and took the substantive lead for evaluating PA management planning and implementation.
- *Frank Muhereza* directed his background in political science and natural resources to the challenges of assessing environmental action planning and action plan implementation at the District and other levels of local government.
- *Monica Kaporiri* brought strong experience in local participation in forestry and other natural resources management field activities. She took the lead for those components of the COBS Support Project that involve outreach and training, especially in the areas of environmental impact review and management.

The team functioned as a unit, sharing information and building consensus as an integral method of operation. As such, this document is presented as a unified report reflecting the team's perspective.

#### **I.4 OVERVIEW**

The COBS Support Project represents a three-year effort that began in September 1999 and ended September 30, 2002. As a "support Project," the effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of the effort depended primarily on results of long- and short-term technical assistance, training and capacity-building, and limited logistical and material support to diverse set of Ugandan government and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) concerned with improving conservation and environmental management. Although COBS Support Project's field focus was confined to the western part of the country, its institutional scope and challenges were national. The limited budget (\$7 million, subsequently reduced to \$5.2) encouraged USAID and ARD-COBS to adopt an indirect strategy of mobilizing personnel and resources within the existing key beneficiary organizations. The Project was efficient and largely successful in this regard; in some areas, remarkable results were achieved.

The two major areas of support for planning and plan implementation focused on (1) redefining the management paradigm for the PA system under the UWA and (2) integrating environmental concerns into local government planning and development programs through improving and "mainstreaming" the District environment action plan (DEAP) process. The evaluation will conclude that COBS Support made instrumental contributions that helped UWA adopt system-wide changes (Section 2.0). Over time, the team expects the resulting management improvements will halt encroachment into PAs, improve ecosystem health, and restore wildlife populations. The evaluation also concludes that the COBS Support Project interventions engaged District, Subcounty, and Parish local government structures and involved council members and local populations to define a state-of-the-art approach to DEAPs. The methodology has been adopted as the national standard and emulated, with varying success, in non-COBS Districts in other areas of the country (Sections 3.0 and 7.0). The approach, moreover, has been so appreciated by local government officials that it is serving as a model for planning in other sectors and is facilitating the incorporation of environmental concerns into the annual sectoral plans, especially in forestry and agriculture. The team further concludes that the participatory process involving local populations and Subdistrict institutions has paved the way for implementation of the plans and for the type of partnerships envisioned under SO7. Pilot project experience provides early support for this conclusion.

The Project was unable to achieve parallel accomplishments in its efforts to institutionalize environmental assessment (EA), review, and management (Section 4.0, covering RMs 3 and 4 in the original TO). From the outset, USAID's strategic refocusing of COBS meant that the Project's original RM, directed to establishing a series of environmental liaison units (ELUs) within national-level lead agencies, was dropped. The ELUs were to have strengthened the National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) in its effort to implement the environmental management provisions of the NES. These units were closely tied to the EA/EIA goals and thus affected implementation of that part of the program. Efforts at the national level failed to gain traction and were scaled back as the Project's budget was reduced. Training, awareness, and

capacity-building at the field level was well received, but we argue that even these accomplishments have not been securely institutionalized.

The Project also provided support on request to the USAID Mission toward achievement of the COBS SO and its integration with the economic growth SO in crafting the ISP's new SO7. The evaluation concludes that this provision for flexibility and mobilization by need generally functioned well, but because of substantial turnover in Mission leadership and SO team staff, there is scant institutional record regarding the use of these outputs.

An exception is ongoing support to ECOTRUST. ECOTRUST, as a COBS SO institution, also underwent a period of prolonged uncertainty as USAID refocused. This refocusing called into question transformation of the organization from USAID/COBS Grants Management Unit (GMU) to autonomous Ugandan conservation NGO. During transition, ARD-COBS provided essential technical, managerial, and organizational development support, without which ECOTRUST might not have survived to meet the next level of challenges in its effort to achieve long-term sustainability as a national environment, conservation, and sustainable development grant-making body. We argue that, despite this support, ECOTRUST remains vulnerable, and we offer suggestions as to how the PRIME/West component of SO7 can help achieve the necessary autonomy for the organization to continue indefinitely into the future (Section 5.0).

The evaluation also documents certain aspects of COBS Support Project structure and administration, especially those that seem relevant to improving performance under SO7 and its support activities (Section 6.0). ARD and CARE overcame initial start-up concerns to provide an integrated team approach that was administratively efficient and encouraged initiative and engagement across a wide range of actors. It is our intention that by evaluating what was and what was not accomplished, the PFE will contribute to capturing salient lessons learned that retain their relevance moving forward as the SO7 expands the involvement of civil society and the private sector in the conservation and use of western Uganda's critical and biologically rich landscapes.

Our presentation adopts the project convention of using the core RMs as a mode for organizing and presenting results. The team strives to report its conclusions and recommendations/lessons learned with reference to the specific findings and analysis that led to them. We use summary tables in each section to document what was accomplished and what was not. Detailed recommendations for specific program modules are covered in the individual RM sections, but the broader programmatic guidance is summarized in the Lessons Learned section. Users of the evaluation results can choose to make use of the detailed findings to more completely follow the evaluation rationale or to focus at the broadest level.

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## SECTION 2.0

### RMI: RATIONALIZING MANAGEMENT OF BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION IN PAS

#### 2.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

RM1's goal was to *"Increase UWA's long-term planning and management capabilities through assistance to develop and implement General Management Plans (GMPs) for selected protected areas."* Prior to COBS and the preceding Action Program for the Environment (APE) program, PA planning had been identified as a serious constraint to effective conservation of resources in and around the country's parks and wildlife reserves. What plans did exist generally had been developed by foreign consultants on short-term missions. They were mostly shelved and not actively used by PA managers other than those who were similarly donor-driven. Senior wardens and staff had no ownership of the plans and saw them as another source of tension between the central authority and the field, and central authorities were sometimes uncomfortable with the expatriate technical assistance. There were no real links between budgeting/day-to-day operations and the plans or planning process. In addition, domestic and international turmoil had facilitated encroachment and illegal hunting; in some areas, game census indicated precipitous drops in animal populations among high-profile species. USAID, through its prior APE experience, judged that integrating policy, system-wide administration, and local PA management through improved planning and implementation could reverse some of these sources of pressure on biodiversity. ARD-COBS was intended to put UWA in a position of continuing this momentum beyond the life of the project and to reinforce other COBS SO2 activities.

ARD will achieve results under two broad headings, illustrated by key outcomes, as follows:

1. *Management Planning*: UWA Planning Unit develops GMPs for four priority PAs: Murchison Falls NP, Bugungu and Karuma Wildlife Reserves (WRs), and Lake Mburo NP.
2. *Management Plan Implementation*: A procedure for annual operations planning (AOP) is developed, tested, and used to guide management decisions and allocations of resources in PAs with and without GMPs.

Not achieved—and eventually dropped—were two additional activities areas:

1. *Management Policy Development*: With affirmation that policy setting was a Ministry attribution, direct policy intervention was outside the scope of ARD-COBS role as a support Project.
2. *Business Development and Planning*: Predicated on opportunities associated with increases in tourism. Given setbacks concurrent with Project start-up, UWA is not yet in a position to benefit from the proposed assistance.

## 2.2 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Targeted Outputs Under TO Modification 2	Observations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revised PA management planning process and manual actively applied by UWA.</li> <li>A cadre of UWA planning staff capable of defining, leading, and managing the PA Management Plan process.</li> <li>Revised PA management planning process and format manual, including standardized costing procedures and design standards actively applied by UWA.</li> <li>AOP formats to guide the allocation, monitoring, and reporting of resources used in managing select PAs.</li> <li>Implementation of selected aspects of the Queen Elizabeth GMP in the area of visitor services.</li> <li>Wildlife sectoral guidelines for EIA.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Done, used in several PAs.</li> <li>ARD-funded staff absorbed by UWA—team in place and completing plans in-house.</li> <li>Progress made on costing; standards accepted and applied in advance of manual.</li> <li>Adopted system-wide in headquarters and PAs.</li> <li>Limited progress. Budget reduced. Visitor displays camera ready (delivered after evaluation); ECOTRUST grant continues program.</li> <li>Complete and submitted to NEMA.</li> </ul>

### 2.2.1 Management planning and preparation of GMPs

*The GMP process was reviewed, rationalized, and streamlined with support from the Project.* The PFE team found a revised PA management planning process and manual actively applied by UWA. ARD-COBS supported UWA planning unit (UWAPU) in this effort with intermittent “medium-term” international technical assistance from a PA planner; a full-time Ugandan Community Conservation specialist (under the CARE subcontract); provisional employment for two UWAPU planners; and administrative, logistical, financial, and transportation support for GMP and related activities. Additional technical assistance for related QEPA implementation support also contributed, though more indirectly.

*Review and revision of the Queen Elizabeth National Park (QENP) GMP* was undertaken according to a draft GMP prepared under the previous APE contract. ARD-COBS provided financial and other support to the UWAPU to organize and lead a series of review meetings in and around QENP with the appropriate subcommittee of the UWA Board, helped UWAPU with revisions required prior to final approval of the QENP GMP, assisted in the graphics and final publication and distribution of the approved version. The document was completed, published, distributed, and referred to by one of the park wardens as “our bible.”

The GMP for QENP took 18 months and cost more than \$150,000 to complete. Stakeholders in the process appreciated the multidisciplinary, participatory approach used in its development. The plan itself is of high quality, but the time and money needed for this process were recognized as not being sustainable for UWA now, or any time soon. QEPA’s GMP adopted a zoned-based as opposed to thematic priority, and this created confusion since UWA conventionally organizes programs by functional sector (tourism, enforcement, etc.).

ARD-COBS Support technical assistance worked with UWA to streamline the approach with the aim of producing quality GMPs more quickly, at lower cost, but without sacrificing the participatory dimension to the process. The streamlining process involved the ARD-COBS technical advisor (TA) leading a review of the GMP process manual; a workshop involving the

QENP GMP multidisciplinary team; and dialogue with senior UWA headquarters, field staff, and other local and international organizations active in PA management planning. The result of this effort was the drafting of a *General Management Plan Process Manual* that validated but streamlined (reducing time and cost) the process. The manual was approved and published with ARD-COBS support (UWA, 2000). The streamlined manual—although still evolving—was judged to be well organized, pragmatic, and fully usable by UWAPU staff and others involved in the planning process.

The ARD's COBS Support proposal suggested that three new GMPs were to have been produced over the three years of the Project. Senior UWA staff indicated a strong preference that implementation of the QENP plan be emphasized over producing subsequent GMPs. What unfolded thus was a division in labor between UWAPU and the COBS Support TA. ARD-COBS focused on a single management plan for Murchison Falls National Park (MFNP) as a test for using the improved approach and format (as well as developing a set of potential project implementation activities for QEPA). The intent was to use MFNP plan as a tool for capacity-building in UWAPU in addition to testing and refining the GMP process.

*ARD's support led to the full institutionalization of the GMP process.* The revised approach was put to practice in developing the Murchison Falls Conservation Area (MFCA) GMP, the first undertaken with ARD-COBS providing core support and guidance (Lamprey, 2001). In fact, UWA developed several plans concurrently using different approaches (CMS in Kidepo Valley, an abbreviated GMP process for Bwindi Impenetrable and Mgahinga NPs, and the new model for MFNP). The GMP approach was weighed against an alternative planning process in Kidepo Valley NP using the Countryside Management Systems (CMS) approach common in the UK. Although CMS was rapid and well structured, it relied on expatriate input, was not consultative, and depended on relatively sophisticated computer and information technology. All plans were completed.

The approved ARD-COBS supported GMP process was sustained, and UWA moved forward with its application and refinement. On the basis of the MFCA experience, the GMP structure and procedures were further revised with input from UWA Planning Units, ARD-COBS technical assistance, and participants in the planning process (June 2001 UWA Workshop). The Planning Unit has been actively applying the GMP approach in its work with plan development for Bwindi and Mgahinga NPs and, for the first time without substantial technical assistance, in Lake Mburo NP. (ARD-COBS continued to support planning personnel, finance, and logistics for the Lake Mburo NP. A new version to bring the manual in line with current practice is scheduled, pending an easing in the workload of the UWAPU, which has been fully engaged in ongoing plans.

*The ARD-COBS-supported GMP process engaged multiple stakeholders and created a sense of ownership and commitment toward actual implementation.* Staff "own" their tasks and feel more responsible and accountable. It is important to underscore that the participatory process, the involvement of multiple stakeholders in the design and review of the draft GMPs, was critical in developing capacity at both the headquarters and the park management levels. This directly addressed the disjointed situation found at the outset and set the stage for effective management implementation. Stakeholders from Districts surrounding PAs were consulted to help

identify problems. GMPs thus design appropriate interventions in such areas as community conservation, problem animal control, allowable access and use of resources within parks, and tourism development and revenue sharing. One chief warden commented, “Park management is not about managing resources, it is about managing people.” People are beginning to respond with more supportive behaviors, but the process is far from complete.

### **2.2.2 Management implementation**

GMPs are of little value unless implemented. Effective implementation requires a system for setting priority actions and allocating resources. The ARD–COBS contract provided for development of an implementation system, but had only limited resources for aspects of GMP implementation requiring capital investment. ARD–COBS adopted the strategy of trying to leverage its central planning and institution-building role to catalyze such investments under the wider USAID–COBS SO2 and from other donors. Linking parks and their surroundings under a unifying landscape approach was to have encouraged many areas of park plan implementation through community conservation programs that were receiving funding under a variety of sister projects. The UWA decision to have ARD–COBS concentrate planning in MFNP limited the potential synergy of this strategy.

*AOPs represent a significant institutional step toward effective plan implementation. COBS Support TA and UWA jointly developed a system of AOPs that provide park staff a key tool to translate general plans into concrete actions.* AOPs are action plans based on the GMP but prepared annually and updated based on the prior year’s accomplishments and shifts in priority. AOPs are practical in including timelines, budget, and human resource needs and they extend down to include sub-programs and staff activities. Senior wardens expressed commitment to the plans because they allow for (1) better management and oversight of staff, (2) facility in requesting and defending resource requests, and, perhaps most important, (3) PA managers to creatively and flexibly bring on board new priorities to meet the contingencies that invariably characterize field operations.

Through the AOPs, the PA plans cease to be documents placed “on the shelf to catch dust” and, instead, are used and referred to regularly by staff at many levels. Senior park managers see the plans as a means of focusing administration, of setting and retaining priorities, and in coordinating potential supporters around a common agenda. This has engendered a broad sense of ownership at all staffing levels that is tempered only by the frequent reassignment of field staff from one PA and position to another. Opportunities to pursue specialized career tracks within the service essentially do not exist at the field level.

The ARD–COBS contract used short-term technical assistance (STTA) and other support for development of a system of AOPs, whereby each PA manager prepares a plan before the beginning of each fiscal year that describes administrative and management activities for the coming fiscal year (based firmly on a GMP), along with financial needs. The system incorporates monitoring, allows for adaptive management decisions, and tracks overall implementation of the AOP and GMP by senior PA staff and headquarters operations staff. AOPs contain far more detail and rigor than any previous annual work plan, and help to clarify, substantiate, and respond to budget requests.

AOPs have been adopted by UWA system-wide and are being used in headquarters departments as well. Managers at all levels were empowered by this tool, which affects accountability and transparency concerns that have hampered UWA's performance in the past. Responsibility for overseeing AOPs rests with the UWA headquarters, Department of Field Operations.

The development of the AOP process was a joint undertaking drawing on UWA staff and ARD STTA; both organizations expressed considerable pride in the product of this collaboration. The STTA consultant successfully conducted a scoping exercise and comprehensive analysis of all aspects of PA operations, including constraints and opportunities for modifying/strengthening current systems and helped UWA prepare a draft AOP for QENP. One of the salient features was the compartmentalizing of "investment packages" necessary for implementation.

The evaluation concurs with the ARD-COBS PA Management Specialist, who considered adoption of the AOP approach to PA management as a "major landmark for UWA" (Lamprey, 2001). At the operational level, the team judged that this planning and implementation were negatively affected by the lack of coordination in shifting personnel from park to park and division to division. Finally, senior management acquires a "marketing tool." QEPA's senior warden, for example, used the program clarity from AOPs as a tool with which to seek funding, including capital expenditure potentially attractive to donors. Such a meeting took place, and ECOTRUST and CARE sister projects, among others, are supporting parts of the QEPA GMP's implementation.

*QEPA GMP Implementation.* COBS Support Project was unable to adequately bridge the transition from PA planning under APE to plan implementation. A broad-based set of interventions in natural resources management, visitor services, community conservation, and staff development was eliminated as a result of the budget cut. Instead, it codeveloped a follow-on implementation support program for QEPA, with ECOTRUST funding and oversight. Through STTA, a possible agenda of support was drawn up that emphasized the comparative strengths of ARD-COBS in areas such as tourism, visitor support, and administrative systems over capital-intensive activities such as roads, relocating park facilities, and enforcement. Despite some progress and continued forward momentum in the suggested agenda, the effort to implement certain parts of the QEPA Management Plan met with limited progress and success. The Visitor's Center, intended to be a centerpiece of implementation support, received inputs toward its preparation but had not been constructed and furnished by the ARD-COBS close-out. ARD-COBS judged that, as a support Project, contracting and construction were largely outside its purview after funds were reduced. Camera-ready interpretive panels, a first output, were observed under final UWA review during the evaluation. Construction of the facility has been handed off to ECOTRUST, with whom implementation had been under discussion from the outset. Specifically:

- The QEPA proposal seeking funding from ECOTRUST was developed under the guidance of ARD-COBS.

- The management of COBS QEPA support has been shared between ARD and ECOTRUST. The memorandum of understanding (MOU) between ECOTRUST and UWA spells out the modalities; ARD is part of the Joint Management Team.
- The delays on the Visitor Center is a result of many factors, including the long process UWA took to determine whether to renovate an existing structure or to build a new one and the EIA process (disposal of the asbestos roofing material).
- In retrospect, it is the PFE's judgment that the Project could have initiated limited implementation at QENP at an earlier stage. Although it is clear that the project was not set up to take on major construction such as roads and buildings, there are numerous areas of implementation that could have potentially minimized the dichotomy between planning and implementation interests. For example, development of logos and signage standards, boundary marking, tourism panel development, certain by-law negotiations, and others could have paralleled other Project efforts to have made the implementation assistance integrate more smoothly with other support. Implementation was, however, inhibited by a climate of uncertainty brought about by a combination of a period of strained USAID-UWA relations and of delays in the ARD-COBS TO modification, which was to have formally authorized implementation expenditures.

### **2.2.3 Business planning and policy**

*National Policy.* Very little direct policy work was undertaken. This was a decision of UWA and the Ministry, where the Ministry was responsible for policy but ARD-COBS PA assistance was to UWA. PA policy was intended to be addressed through working with the UWA Board of Trustees (BoT) and other key Ministry partners in a series of focused forums designed to a state-of-the-art set of management policies intended to guide PA planning, management, and decision-making. Although the ARD-COBS offered services, no real role was defined for the project, and this effort was dropped as scope and budget were scaled back.

ARD-COBS did contribute to a lower level set of inputs to policy and decision making. The degree of flux experienced by the UWA BoT and Executive Director over the initial years of project implementation precluded the more systematic objective of policy development, promulgation, and public awareness raising. During APE, UWA determined the need for and recruited an internationally experienced PA system director who then operated for a three-year period under what proved to be an unworkable management style, ended his term, and was replaced by the current national Executive Director. In theory the Executive Director takes on day-to-day management under the broad guidance of the BoT. Unfortunately, the BoT was irregular in its oversight and frequently attempted to micro-manage the organization.

ARD response was to focus on indirect influence such as through assisting in the Community Conservation programs through both the Community Conservation wardens and through its sister projects, which also serves to identify policy issues. Also, the Project helped establish EIA guidelines for governing private sector and other GoU activity within park bounds and, more broadly, for the wildlife estate. Since the effort was more practical than policy focused, the subject is treated in Section 4.0, with other EA/EIA activities.

*Business planning.* ARD's COBS proposal included a proposed set of actions addressing the need for UWA's internal operations to be put on a sound financial footing. PAs were also assisted in establishing an improved and equitable relationship with the private sector. Political and social events affected tourism revenues and reduced the immediacy in the need for business planning. Even UWA salaries were reportedly subsidized by the World Bank and USAID (APE) for a time.

As a consequence, business and fiscal policy and administration remain in need of revision. The current system of PA concessions remains an urgent issue relating to the private sector, as do revenue generation and revenue-sharing mechanisms. The GMP plans increasingly involve interaction with the private sector—through internal park concessions, outreach, grandfathered community economic use of park resources (e.g., fishing villages within the parks), and pilot consumptive use activities. The PFE team observed Lake Mburo NP wardens in active negotiation, for example, with the sport hunting operator outside the park in an effort to devise most appropriate institutional and financial arrangements with surrounding communities. Park management, private sector operators, local government, and community-based organizations (CBOs) were seeking to establish a framework in which each party's interests were served.

## **2.3 CONCLUSIONS**

UWA's planning capacity places it in a position of leadership in coordinating multiple sources of support and in stabilizing external pressures on park biodiversity. That UWA is able to recognize limitations and the need for external research and expertise indicates that UWA continues to grow into its institutional role of leadership with respect to PAs.

GMPs can be used as fund-raising mechanisms since the importance and rationale for funding certain activities are explicit, convincing, and may be perceived as harmonious with a funding agency's objectives. Capitalizing biological diversity and environmental services is of shared importance to both public and private sector PA stakeholders.

System-wide adoption of AOPs is a major accomplishment. As the AOP process moves toward its third year, the PFE team concludes that, if continued, AOPs represent a major step toward safeguarding park biodiversity. AOPs impose accountability and encourage initiative at all levels. Even a minimum of management and protection will go a long way to restoring wildlife populations. However, frequent reassignment of park staff across functional and geographic divisions inhibits institutional efficiency.

Perceived gap between planning and implementation is important to minimize. It will always be possible to focus on funding gaps and shortfalls rather than maximizing resources available.

## **2.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Through PRIME and other SO7 interventions, GMP implementation should be continued. Most GMPs contain reference to private sector activities, and these should be examined on an individual PA basis in developing specific relationships between entrepreneurial activity and UWA's resource management mandate.

2. Follow-on USAID-funded actions can build on the increased capacity to implement PA plans:
  - Support chief wardens and Community Conservation and tourism wardens to take strong coordination roles with programs involving the private sector and communities.
  - Refine and expand the Community Protected Area Institutions (CPIs) in areas such as channeling revenue-sharing funds into stimulating productive investments, advocating and negotiating for effective by-laws.
  - Ensure that private sector concessions are consistent and integrated with the GMP, AOPs, and with EA requirements.
3. Senior PA staff and District officials should try to increase communication, information-sharing, and coprogramming, and thus harmonize programs at the landscape level. SO7 can support this improved integration by encouraging involvement of civil society and commercial operators in public fora.
4. UWA should focus on the application and use of M&E as a means of sustaining forward momentum. With the AOP process being pervasive, feedback should be immediately translated to annual programming adjustments and priority setting.
5. UWA should review personnel assignments and other human resources policies to better institutionalize the new system-wide processes of planning and implementation.
6. Integrate exploratory sport hunting interventions in wildlife reserves and communal and private ranchlands, and link these programs with other community conservation programs, outreach, and institutions (such as the CPIs).
7. Review and harmonize legislation that affects resource use, access, and conservation in PAs.

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## **SECTION 3.0**

### **RM2: ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT IN BIODIVERSE LANDSCAPES/DISTRICTS**

Under RM2, COBS Support Project planned to increase capacity of local District councils and rural communities to develop and implement Environmental Action Plans (EAPs) to conserve and protect natural resources as an integral part of District-level development.

#### **3.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

At the broad level, the COBS Support Project planned to (1) Review and streamline the DEAP process, (2) prepare DEAPs, and (3) implement EAPs in critical ecosystems. Specifically, the following key results/targets were planned under this TO:

- DEAPs developed in four Districts.
- EAP implementation active in at least 4 Districts, with activities of at least 10 Subcounty EAPs under implementation.
- System in place and capacity built in local government for M&E of DEAP implementation.
- An interdistrict (“landscape”) grouping is established of local government officials and partners representing the four COBS Support target Districts, which exchanges experience and information and acts as an advocacy group in E/NR issues in southwest Uganda.

To achieve the above results/targets, the following outputs were planned:

- Revised DEAP process manual that includes relevant local council (e.g., Subcounty) action planning guidelines.
- Parish EAPs (PEAPs), Subcounty EAPs (SEAPs), and DEAPs produced and submitted for approval in all target Districts.
- Linkages established and local capacity built to enable local authorities responsible for EAP implementation to connect with potential sources of support such as “internally” generated revenue (local taxes), PMA nonsectoral conditional grants, and other donor/NGO development funds.
- A series of lessons-learned documents and capacity-building sessions developed and delivered, in collaboration with the USAID-funded Environmental Planning and Economic Development (EPED) project, that explain and extend the participatory EAP process, including the demonstration of results.
- A pilot process for developing and enforcing agreements for the management of natural resources held under control of local authorities.

At the outset of COBS, DEAP planning had begun in a number of Districts, mostly where the process had been driven by donor interest. In other words, environment, outside of donor-driven programs, was simply not on the planning and funding radar screen. Under DEAPs prior to COBS Support Project, activity was limited and isolated from other sectors and thus had negligible impact on land use in effected Districts. An underlying premise of COBS thus was that for environmental concerns to be addressed at the local government level and in the

rural milieu itself, increased sensitivity and institutional integration of E/NR management as a cross-cutting concern would be necessary. Stand-alone programs would need to give way to environmentally sound activities being mainstreamed into District institutions and into the everyday lives of rural resource users.

### 3.2 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: DEAP

The program designed to meet these challenges was comprehensive and ambitious. The summary table (below) of verified results presented here confirms that the Project met its revised planning targets, and the fact that PEAPs, SEAPs, and DEAPs were developed in all four focus Districts is an achievement for which the Project ought to be credited. The table also documents progress toward plan implementation.

Results and Outputs Summary Table	Target	Actual
<b>Development of DEAPs</b>		
NEMA DEAP process manual guidelines reviewed.	1	1
PEAPs formulated and approved in 4 Districts.	316	316
SEAPs formulated and approved in 4 Districts.	62	62
DEAPs formulated and approved in 4 Districts.	4	4
Approved SEAPs integrated into SDP in 4 Districts.	62	62
Approved DEAPs integrated into DDPs in 4 Districts.	4	4
NEMA Draft "Best Practices" Process manual produced.	1	1
<b>Active Implementation of EAPs</b>		
DEAP M&E manual developed, implemented, and in use in target Districts.	1	1
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation of DEAP implementation</b>		
SEAP priorities implemented in ARD focus Districts in collaboration with ECOTRUST.	10	12
DEAP Pilot Implementation Activities (PIA) undertaken.	4	4
Guide funding opportunities for DEAP implementation drafted.	1	1
<b>Establishment Inter-District Grouping</b>		
A LTF established and functional in ARD-COBS target Districts.	1	1
LTF workshops held to link Districts with funding bodies.	?	1
A Lessons-Learned from DEAP processes document drafted.	1	1

#### 3.2.1 Review and streamline the DEAP process

When the ARD-COBS Project started in 1999, several Districts were undertaking DEAPs using different approaches. IUCN was supporting the Districts of Kapchorwa; USAID was working through EPED in Masindi and APE in Mbale; and NEMA provided assistance, with World Bank support, in Kasese and Kabale in the southwest (NEMA also supported several other Districts in other regions). All these DEAP approaches and processes were reviewed to rationalize the process and streamline guidelines for implementation of DEAPs in ARD-COBS focus Districts. The project supported a national stakeholders workshop on DEAP formulation in February 2000. A National Task Force chaired by NEMA with a membership drawn from various DEAP practitioners was formed to draft a Best Practices Manual, on the basis of which an ARD consultant developed an operational draft DEAP manual in September 2000. This distillation of process and its adoption represents a significant accomplishment and point of departure for the subsequent refinement of the process.

*Transfer of successful model in process.* The ARD-COBS Project has strengthened NEMA as an institution by supporting and promoting its leading role in DEAPs through the provision of logistical and financial support toward convening NEMA's DEAP workshops and the National Task Force (NTF). NTF was formed for the preparation of a draft "Best Practices Process Manual"; draft DEAP "Best Practices" Process manual has been prepared. To transfer lessons to the field, NEMA's District Support Staff helped train facilitators for ground-floor planning at the Parish level, and supported ARD-COBS in the development of PEAP, SEAP, and DEAP methodologies. ARD-COBS was tasked by the NTF to take the lead in the revision of the DEAP "Best Practices Process Manual," which is being developed by the Project. A final version of the DEAP manual was being formulated to incorporate the various experiences from DEAP implementation. The revised DEAP manual will be developed after the National Workshop and in consultation with a recalled NTF.

The ARD-COBS/CARE Environmental Planning TA produced a first draft of the Lessons-Learned Document entitled "Bridging the Gap between Theory and Practice: Participatory Bottom-up Planning for Management of Environment Under Decentralized Governance," which revised and prepared for sharing with different DEAP practitioners and stakeholders. This output came too late for the evaluation to assess this product's quality and impact, but it does reflect the Project's commitment to continuously improving processes.

*Monitoring and Evaluation System of DEAP Implementation Established.* ARD-COBS STTA assisted in developing a DEAP M&E manual that allows each District to carefully follow EAP implementation in the approximately 60 Subcounties. The M&E manual has been adopted and internalized by key District staff and has been incorporated into the draft DEAP documents. The M&E document specifies the reporting requirements and includes an action plan matrix that highlights the specific actions required of key stakeholders. The active involvement of key stakeholders is necessary both for program implementation and monitoring because of the limited human and financial resources available in the target Districts' administration for monitoring activities. The system seems comprehensive, but it is too early to judge what its institutional impact will be in the post-Project period.

### **3.2.2 DEAPs developed in four Districts**

DEAPs have been developed in all the four ARD-COBS focus Districts through a highly participatory DEAP formulation process. To ensure this extensive participation, new procedures were developed, tested and modified, and retested, concurrently with the training of DEAP facilitators. As described in detail in Project documents, the DEAPs were developed from the bottom-up—that is, the development started with the Parishes, which each developed their own plan, then to the level of the Subcounties, and finally to the District level. Overall coordination was carried out by a DEAP District task force (DTF).

*Establishment of the DEAP DTFs involved key players and build broad ownership of multiple sectors from the outset.* To spearhead the DEAP process in each District, a seven-person DTF was constituted by the Chief Administrative Officer. Members often include representatives of the District technical planning committees and/or heads of departments closely linked to E/NR such as

forestry, agriculture, fisheries, as well as planning. COBS Support Project DEAP/Cs were ex-officio members of the DTF and the DEOs, and provided a secretariat role for the DTFs.

The DTFs chair varied in target Districts. In Bushenyi the District Extension and Production Coordinator functioned as chair. In Rukungiri (and later Kanungu) and Kisoro, the DTFs were chaired by Deputy Chief Administrative Officers. The role of the DTF was to sensitize and mobilize District technical administration and political leaders about the importance of the DEAP and the DEAP process through presentations during District council sessions. Local environment committees were formed at the different local council levels in target Districts where they did not exist. These committees in turn served to sensitize local communities on environmental issues.

*The Project effectively used formulation of PEAP guidelines and the draft DEAP manual to further a process of mainstreaming environment.* The formulation of PEAPs, SEAPs, and DEAPs was spearheaded by teams of EAP facilitators in the target Districts. These facilitators were identified and trained from among the Subcounty extension staff, including agriculture, forestry, veterinary services, health, cooperatives, fisheries, Community Development Officers. In the Districts where ARD-COBS was undertaking the DEAP process, the existence of many players with similar and/or converging interests created a high potential for duplication of efforts, confusion, and conflict, yet at the same time the plethora of projects, experiences, and institutions working in environment also presented an opportunity for important synergy. *The draft DEAP manual was embraced as a unifying diagnostic tool that could be used by other programs as well.*

*PEAPs developed and approved.* Using trained EAP facilitators, the Project successfully supported the formulation of all 316 PEAPs in the four target Districts. PEAPs formulation involved an elaborate and carefully planned data collection process at the Parish in which representatives from all the villages in the Parish participated. The process includes the following: transect walks across a Parish covering several villages to identify environment problems experienced; brainstorming session on the environmental problems identified to prioritize problems; development of an action plan matrix to rank the six most critical environmental problems; and actions recommended are at Parish level. PEAPs were kept simple and focused on real environmental problems. The whole process of formulation of the 316 PEAPs took four months, from January 2001 to April 2001. The developed PEAPs were launched during Parish Environment Awareness Training (PEATs) (see Section 4.0).

*SEAPs developed and approved.* To be able to take into account the richness of the individual PEAPs, yet avoid the tendency toward homogenization that comes from synthesizing and prioritizing inputs from all the PEAPs, the COBS Support Project supported the use of visioning in each Subcounty. The following description of the process shows how ARD-COBS progressively built capacity and ownership at each step of implementation.

The basic tenet of the visioning approach was the development of a consensus on a desired vision of improved environment and natural resources conditions in the Subcounty. Common environmental issues from constituent Parishes were synthesized, and a matrix was generated that linked identified priorities to proposed actions. Specifically, the vision-based action planning method entails the following:

- Develop a vision by identifying current and future opportunities and assessing available resources.
- Identify appropriate actions and build consensus around planned actions to realize this vision.
- Identify actors needed to implement desired actions.
- Identify gaps in local implementation needs (human and financial) and mold these into viable projects to attract the necessary resources.
- Identify the institutional responses/changes required to initiate/execute these actions.

Participants in the process include members from the SEAP Task Forces (STFs), LC2 chairpersons, Parish Chiefs and LC2 executives, *leading farmers in the Subcounty, as well as a selection of PEAP participants as representatives of the communities*. According to Project estimates, more than 2000 people participated in SEAP formulation in Bushenyi, Rukungiri/Kanungu, and Kisoro Districts. The visioning and formulation of the SEAPs were guided by the same facilitators who had guided the development of the PEAPs, but who had received additional training specific to the SEAP formulation process. All SEAPs have been formulated and distributed in the target Districts, have been approved and are being used in Subcounty development planning.

*DEAPs formulated and approved.* The same participatory process used for the development of PEAPs and SEAPs also formed the basis for the development of the DEAPs. As a precursor to the DEAP formulation process, a situation analysis report was produced that summarized District-level conditions and incorporated emergent cross-cutting issues from the SEAPs. Situation analysis reports were discussed during two-day workshops in each District. Results of these discussions were incorporated in District-wide visions, plans, and actions. The workshops were attended by LC5 councilors and executives, District departments and sectors, partner organization (NGOs and projects), central government agencies, Subcounty chairpersons and chiefs, and chairpersons of Districts statutory bodies. More than 500 people participated in the four District DEAP workshops. The approval of DEAPs in all Districts was postponed, awaiting the formation of new District councils by July 2002; the intent was to use the DEAP approval process to brief the new District councilors on the DEAP processes and gain their commitment.

All the DEAPs in the four target Districts had been approved starting with Bushenyi on 19 July 2002, followed by Kisoro and Rukungiri. The Kanungu DEAP approval process was held on 9 August 2002, and was witnessed by the PFE team.

*The DEAP process was important because it helped integrate EAPs into overall multisectoral District Development Plans (DDPs).* Unlike many previous DEAP efforts that were isolated, low-impact ARD-CARE assistance immediately attracted wider stakeholder buy-in. The integration of the EAPs with overall development plans started immediately after the Parish and Subcounty exercises were formulated. This is important because it illustrates that many of the ENR issues and problems identified at Parish and Subcounty level were useful to the District planners in the preparation of the DDP. The integration of EAPs into the DDP proceeded concurrently with the development of the EAPs. After DEAP drafts were completed, mainstreaming of EAPs did not wait for the approval of the DEAPs by the District councils in the four focus Dis-

tracts. In reality, as soon as the drafts were ready, the District Development Plans incorporated budgets for environmental issues/problems and priorities identified in the DEAPs.

This process of integrating EAPs into District-wide development plans and budgets was an important Project accomplishment. Without implementation of environment activities by multiple sectors, little could be accomplished—as was the case prior to the Project. The District Environment Department in all four target Districts consists of one person, the District Environment Officer (DEO), without any other subordinate staff. The annual budget estimates for the environment department in Kisoro was Ushs. 2.5 million. In Bushenyi, in 2001/2, the District Production and Environment Department budgeted Ushs. 176 million, but was allocated only 36%. These sums are insignificant. Previous DEO funding through NEMA created minor isolated programs. COBS Support Project mainstreaming and budgeting represent a major breakthrough.

### **3.2.3 EAP implementation**

Implementation took place at both District and Subcounty levels. The intent of early funding was to consolidate and internalize processes and lessons resulting from the action planning and to strengthen the link between planning and implementation.

*Implementation of SEAP priorities.* ARD-COBS worked with other USAID-funded partners, especially ECOTRUST, to undertake pilot implementation of selected SEAP priority activities. COBS Support Project worked with its partners to ensure that implementation activities were properly supported by available human and financial resources. ARB-COBS organized a DEAP team/ECOTRUST meeting in Kabale in June 2001, and developed a short-term action plan for selected pilot SEAP implementation activities in order to qualify for funding support from ECOTRUST. Pilot implementation of SEAPs started in three Districts in July 2001.

The SEAPs, which built on the visioning process, were specific because they not only delineated the type of actions needed to move toward a common positive environmental vision for the Subcounty, but also determined the nature of resources (human and financial) required to implement those actions, on the basis of which gaps in resources and services were identified. Projects were developed around these gaps, while identifying, at the same time, the various institutional responses needed to address why local people and institutions are not tackling obvious E/NR problems.

The following were considered to assess available resources: (1) the direct involvement of local community members; (2) the possibility of co-opting input from “sister” USAID- and CARE- funded projects into SEAP implementation; and (3) the provision of technical advice from the LC3 and LC5 government bodies such as NEMA and UWA, and specialized technical assistance from the Project. Where additional funding was required, implementation activities that were favored were those that could easily leverage funding from the following: (1) government grants to the Subcounties under the PMA (Nonsectoral Conditional Grants) and National Agricultural Advisory Development Service; (2) grants from various sources operating within Uganda, including ECOTRUST; and (3) revenue sharing from UWA PAs. ECOTRUST grants were awarded to support the following.

In *Kisoro District*, SEAP priority activities for implementation were undertaken under a project called Nyakabande Subcounty Environmental Improvement Project (NSEIP), and focused on soil conservation (to control soil erosion on slopes of hills such as Murambi, Shoji, and Gisorora) and water/sanitation improvement (to promote community hygiene and construct Ferrocement water tanks). Project implementation was undertaken by Gisorora Twubake Association (GTA) in collaboration with the District Local Government and Water Aid. Other Subcounty EAPs planned for implementation included Nyarushanje Tree and Fruit Production project in Nyabwishenya Subcounty and Amajyambere Iwacu Agro-forestry project in Muramba Subcounty.

In *Bushenyi District*, SEAP implementation was undertaken in Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council with a local NGO called Rural Agricultural Services Support Association (RUASSA), in collaboration with Bushenyi District Farmers Association (BUDIFA), supported by ECOTRUST and the Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council. The project implemented was called Kabwohe-Itendero Town Council Environmental Project, and was intended to reduce the rate of environmental degradation/pollution and improve sanitation and cleanliness in the town council. The following activities were undertaken through the project: (1) construction of eco-san toilet in the town council; (2) establishment of a fruit and tree nursery as a source of planting material for the town council; and (3) sensitization seminars on general environmental protection, management of garbage, pollution, and general sanitation.

CARE's QEPA Community Conservation sister project supported Kicwamba and Kyambura Subcounties in Bushenyi to implement SEAP priorities involving live fencing of the park boundary using Mauritius thorn. Community members have been trained in use of the thorn plant.

In *Rukungiri District*, SEAP implementation focused on promoting a harmonious relationship between QEPA and the surrounding communities in Bwambara Subcounty, Rukungiri District. In collaboration with the District local government and Bwambara Subcounty, a local NGO, Rukungiri District Farmers Association (RUDIFA), was supported by ECOTRUST to undertake (1) sustainable natural resources management awareness raising in communities adjacent to QEPA; (2) growing of indigenous multipurpose trees and wood lots in 48 villages adjacent to QEPA; (3) establishment of a live fence of Mauritius thorn around the boundary of 4 Parishes surrounding the Park; and (4) the increase in crop and livestock yields for small-holder farmers in the 48 villages by over 50%. After the creation of Kanungu District, many of these activities continued in the new District, especially the establishment of live fences to deal with problem animals/vermin and tree growing to control soil fertility loss.

*DEAP Pilot Implementation Activities.* ARD is also supporting 4 DEAP pilot implementation activities in focus Districts. These early stage initiatives will be transferred to ECOTRUST support when ARD-COBS ends. Their thematic focus was determined by the frequency of occurrence of the problem/issue across the multi-District landscape. Consideration was also given to the possibility of and potential for achieving early results that demonstrate success in the remaining life of the Project. Particular attention was placed on the potential for the planned interventions to contribute to conservation of biodiversity within or in the vicinity of the respective Subcounties. From the selected thematic areas, the specific implementation activities were identified on the basis of the level of prioritization by the District, relevance to biodiversity con-

servation, and proximity to critical biodiversity areas. They were also determined by the need to have variety, avoid duplication, and generate lessons learned across the various land use/cover areas. The replicability and opportunities for anchoring the selected implementation activity to public information and education was also considered as critical.

Many of the pilot implementation activities were slow in starting. The Bushenyi Pilot Implementation Activity was formally launched in 2002. PIA implementation had only started in Rukungiri. Materials are already on site for a nursery bed establishment, and actual work should be starting soon. The implementation of DEAP priorities through PIAs had commenced with the following:

- Soil and water conservation in landslide-prone areas of Nyabubaare, Kyamuhunga, and Ryeru Subcounties of Bushenyi District. Eleven planning and coordinating meetings were held at the District and Subcounty level; 270 contact farmers were selected in 27 villages to lead the conservation efforts. These farmers host their neighbors during demonstrations and training.
- Management of problem animals in Kihhi and Nyamirama Subcounties of Kanungu District. The District council was sensitized, and 21 trainees were selected as vermin guard recruits.
- Management and conservation of lakeshore wetlands of lakes Kayumbu and Chahafi in Murora Subcounty Kisoro District. A Subcounty implementation committee has been formed. Wetlands Inspectorate Division and NEMA were consulted and data collected for a Wetland Management Plan.
- Increasing tree cover in Nyarushanje and Nyakagyeme Subcounties in Rukungiri District. Subcounty councilors were sensitized and farmers were selected for on-farm training in apiary.

The ARD-COBS Support Project has been successful at engaging stakeholders at multiple levels. The following table presents some examples of how, through institutional support activities, specific behaviors are beginning to change.

*Capacity for Districts to fundraise helped reduce the sense of breach between plan and implementation.* A guide to funding opportunities for DEAP implementation has been drafted by the Project. This guide provides simple, generic pointers regarding grant applications, irrespective of source, and an outline of what a grant application should contain. It lists 10 granting agencies in Uganda that may potentially provide funds to the type of project emerging from EAPs. Proposal guidelines from the different granting bodies are included in the guide. This guide was completed in August 2002 during the PFE, but the training in fundraising that had been earmarked for Districts has not been undertaken.

### Examples of Successful Engagement

- In Nyakabande Subcounty, where Gisorora Twubake Association was implementing SEAP with support from ECOTRUST and COBS Support Project, by-laws had been put in place to restrict cattle grazing on Gisorora Hill in order to enable the growth of *vernonia* species planted for bund stabilization. However, the LC5 Chair-man cattle were once found grazing on the Hill, and he was fined Ushs. 50,000/=, which he duly paid.
- Through Public Information and Education (PIE) that accompanied SEAP implementation, a member of RUASSA in Kabwohe-Itendero said, "I felt very ashamed after I learned that our poorly constructed toilet led to fecal contamination of all our so-called protected water sources."
- In Kicwamba Subcounty, the CARE/QEPA, in collaboration from the Project, had supported the construction of trenches around the boundary of the PA, which had been picked by communities in Parishes where the CC project was not operating. In Ryeru Subcounty, where the project was collaborating with ECOTRUST to construct bunds and stabilize the bunds with grass, the technology was being quickly adopted by non-focus farmers.
- In Murora Subcounty, the community was policing Lake Chahafi, where fish fries were recently introduced in a bid to restock the lake.
- By using the Bushenyi DEO to train staff of COBS Support Project non-target Districts in the development of DEAPs, NEMA seems to have acknowledged the experience and technical capacity built by Project in environment action planning.
- The EAP process has generated substantial interest and capacity in environmental management from the vil-lages to the Districts, from the common people to the District politicians. This will provide useful entry points for future development assistance. It had, for example, helped PA management in reducing conflicts between communities and PAs in DEAP-focus Districts, compared with non-DEAP Districts.
- The DEAPs are invaluable, not only as EAPs, but also as broad strategic documents as demonstrated by the new Kanungu District, which was inaugurated on 1 July 2001. A new District it is yet to complete its core documentation, including its DDP. The LC5 Chairperson frequently uses the DEAP as a basic information source and planning instrument to inform her meetings with local and central government staff.
- While the approval of some DEAPs was delayed, awaiting swearing in of newly elected District councils, it did not take long for the draft DEAPs to be approved by the respective councils, even when there were many new councilors in each District. Kisoro, Bushenyi, and Rukungiri DEAPs were approved in July 2002; that of Kanungu was approved in August 2002 during this PFE. This is an indication that COBS Support Project has built a critical mass of technical capacity in EAP that is out there in the Districts. The new District councilors were already familiar with the DEAP process, for they attended EAP processes at one time.
- In Chahafi and Kayumbu lakes in Murora Subcounty Kisoro, surrounding communities agreed following inter-vention by the Project to leave 3 m from the lake shore uncultivated.

ARD-COBS planned to build capacity for Districts to fundraise to implement DEAP priorities through training and providing linkages and a guide book for funding organizations. Although Districts had been linked with ECOTRUST for supporting implementation of SEAP priorities, the fund-raising capacity of Districts and Subcounties responsible for EAP implementation was still lacking. However, most Districts were using their own resources from the District treasury (including local taxes, PMA non-sectoral conditional grants, and other donor/NGO develop-ment funds) to implement DEAP priorities, an issue which was found to promote sustainability of EAP implementation, although the scope of implementation activities possible using local funds was thought to be grossly inadequate by District officials in Rukungiri.

ARD-COBS Project is developing an exit strategy that will enable its partners, especially UWA, NEMA, the local governments, ECOTRUST, and others, to continue implementation of planned activities after 30 September, when the Project finally closes. The responsibilities that will be taken on by these partners should be clearly specified to allow a smooth transition.

*LTF Established.* ARD-COBS adopted a landscape approach to E/NR planning and plan implementation. This approach incorporated the administrative Districts in the different geographical landscapes of southwestern Uganda with PAs in order to promote the conservation of biodiversity in these critical ecosystems and enhance benefits to society. DEOs of Kasese and Kabale were usually invited to LTF meetings in recognition of their links to the “integral landscape” of the Southern Albertine rifts. Transboundary issues—especially the migration of wildlife—were referred to the central government for lack of capacity in the Districts.

The LTF also provided a forum for discussing a range of operational and policy issues emerging from DEAP development, which was later referred to the concerned central government bodies. The LTF included issues such as wetlands, which have a cross-border dimension but whose sound management is difficult to enforce because they are usually degraded by prominent locals and local leaders. Other issues referred to the center where local management was constrained were the transboundary migration of wildlife; the conduct of EIAs; abuse of mineral prospecting licenses by large-scale mining concerns; the disposal of non-biodegradable substances whose manufacture is authorized by the center; and regulation of use of genetically modified seeds.

*The LTF helped bridge the gap between planning and implementation by facilitation access to funding sources.* During the second LTF meeting, held in March 2002, a number of grant-making bodies considered as potential sources of funds for different aspects of DEAP were invited to give a series of presentations on the scope of their activities, application requirements, and procedures. Presentations were made by NEMA (on prospective small-grants program), Canadian Fund for Local initiatives (CFLI), UNDP (on the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Program), ECOTRUST, UWA (revenue sharing), Mgahinga and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest Conservation Trust (MBIFCT), and Ireland Aid (on its in-country micro-projects scheme).

### 3.3 CONCLUSIONS: DEAP PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Relying on technical and administrative staff to build *core* capacity for EAP is more sustainable than involvement of District and Subcounty politicians/councilors (including the local environment committees) because the latter rotate more frequently through elections.

*The end of the Project, without a follow-on intervention, is likely to affect the progress of activity implementation by collaborating partners.* The social, economic, ecological, and environment outcomes of COBS Support Project support to EAP capacity and implementation of identified priorities will become visible after several years.

*The DEAP process provides an opportunity for building synergies in the implementation of EAPs with GMP implementation in Subcounties adjacent to PAs.* The mechanism is UWA’s Community Conservation Program, in which Community-Protected Areas Institution use structures similar to those of the local councils. The statutory revenue-sharing by UWA with communities adjacent to PAs is already financing projects relevant to PA management, but which are drawn from PEAPs and SEAPs.

*A foundation has been laid for biodiversity conservation, which will enhance benefits to the communities living in the vicinity of PAs.* Measurable environmental and ecological outcomes resulting

from the support to the District by the Project and the socioeconomic impacts will not only be difficult to attribute directly to the Project—since it was mainly working behind the scenes and in collaboration with other partners—but will also become visible only several years after the Project has closed. For example, the evaluation team was reliably informed by QENP authorities that there were fewer problems for the PA management, especially poaching and encroachment on the PA, in the Districts where COBS Support Project had supported DEAPs (Bushenyi, Rukungiri, Kanungu) compared with those Districts where DEAP process had not yet been fully undertaken (such as Kasese). Project impact is more visible in terms of capacity built.

*The overall process gave inadequate attention to gender issues.* The majority of Subcounty extension staff in COBS Support Project target District are male. The majority of those identified for training were therefore male. To be selected, one had to pass a written competence exam. In Rukungiri, only one female was identified for training. Although she was selected to become an EAP facilitator, even when she did not make the qualifying mark, she later turned out to be the best EAP facilitator and most popular with the communities to the extent that EAP meetings were referred to as “Molly’s meetings,” after her name. This implied two issues: the failure to gender-mainstream EAP facilitators’ training may have left out many other effective communicators. And, written exams may not be the most appropriate means to determine effectiveness of field-based trainers.

*The link between national and District levels was not sufficiently strengthened.* COBS Support Project support model to the DEAP planning process put primary responsibility in NEMA as the lead agency in coordinating the implementation of NEAP objectives. Although NEMA assumed its fully statutory responsibilities in steering the DEAP planning processes, sometimes its experience in this process did not evolve together with the practitioners in the field. Their participation in critical DEAP process in the Project-target District tapered off with time. On a number of occasions, even when invited, NEMA would not turn up to witness DEAP activities in the Project-target Districts.

*Institutional development needed for a landscape approach was not comprehensive.* The LTF insufficiently incorporated District forests/forest reserves and UWA/PAs into broader intrajurisdictional issues analysis, planning, and resolution. CPIs were not well-integrated into DEAPs. COBS Support Project was limited in its ability to address this shortcoming because of its being assigned a geographically distant park (MFNP).

*Delays in implementation limit usefulness of pilot implementation activities.* The pilots came too late to make a difference during the Project, but they do reveal general motivations and Subdistrict-level capacity EAP structures to engage themselves, CBOs, and the NGOs in DEAP implementation.

### 3.4 RECOMMENDATIONS: DEAP PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. *DEOs must make use of M&E tools to encourage plan implementation and recognition of progress.* DEOs can strengthen sustainability of the planning capacity built in District and Subcounty technical and political officials reviewing progress in collaboration with development partners, including those that COBS Support Project had been working with.

2. *Local government projects and elements of SO7 need work with the GoU to support harmonizing participatory planning policies and institutional mandates.* DDPs and DEAPs have different legislative origins (local government and the National Environment Statute, respectively). Formal and complete integration of DEAP and DDP requires legislative reforms.
3. *Build equivalent capacity by replicating the project's DEAP process in other Districts.* The utility of bottom-up planning is central to the DDP, yet the Districts acknowledge that they do not have the technical capacity, expertise, and resources to implement such planning. In the Districts where the DEAP process has been undertaken, District administration see the DEAP experience as building vital capacity and providing information and techniques for current DDPs and future use. Replication should be undertaken in the broader context of support to local government and decentralization.
4. *Districts and the PA senior wardens need to forge stronger links to support integration of conservation and development.* In communities living next to the PAs, projects that have been earmarked for financing under the revenue-sharing scheme should all be drawn from EAPs of the adjacent Subcounties by PA management in collaboration with respective local authorities. The initiatives being undertaken by CARE–Uganda through QEPA Community Conservation project in forging PA–local council links in a few Subcounties and Parishes in Bushenyi and Rukungiri, which complemented COBS Support Project's work on a broader front in QEPA, should be supported once ARD–COBS project closes.
5. *NEMA should undertake a concerted initiative to share the findings of COBS Support Project lessons-learned document, to improve ongoing DEAP processes.*
6. *CARE should use other funding to transfer the vision-based planning as used at the Subcounty and District EAP formulation be adopted by the Districts and the local government Ministry for other aspects of development planning in local government.* This is because visioning is participatory, focused, long-term horizon, strengthens ownership, and separates roles at various levels and strengthens available partnerships. A national-level workshop could be considered.
7. *Link conservation to incomes where possible.* For successful conservation and sustainable development intervention, alternative forms of livelihood need to be provided through supporting income generating activities. The local communities living around PAs and other fragile ecosystem, we were told during a community meeting, are not impervious to change. Poverty is what makes it difficult for them to change their ways.
8. *The Project and ECOTRUST should identify and link the local governments with new partners who will continue to provide support to DEAP priority implementation.* For this to happen, the Project needs to sit down with the leadership in the target Districts to identify which activities can be carried on by the Districts after the Project closes, and which ones would require external assistance for implementation. This process will also involve identifying those activities whose implementation has been completed.

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## **SECTION 4.0**

### **RM3: INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT AND CAPACITY-BUILDING: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW<sup>2</sup>**

#### **4.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The RMs had the following objectives:

- EAs are mainstreamed in sectoral and local development through increased capacity of Districts to incorporate EA, review, and monitor development plans, policies, and actions.
- Capacity and effectiveness of EA/EIA training and education delivery mechanisms increased in support of EA and its incorporation into District, national management agenda, and PA management.
- Public vigilance with respect to environmental impact of rural resource use.
- Conservation and sustainable use of Uganda natural resources enhanced through effective PIE.

To meet these objectives, the following outputs were planned:

- In-service training for District technical and administrative staff and selected development partners to prepare at least 80 local government officials and officers with capacity to evaluate development activities based on NES.
- Training of trainers (ToT) program for grass-roots delivery of environmental management awareness (integrated with RM2 PIE activities).
- Preparation of an EIA manual as a public sector desk reference for lead agencies to increase the number of NEMA-compliant EIAs.
- Assistance in development of a certification system for private-sector EIA practitioners.
- Development of EIA guidelines for wildlife subsector. UWA is the primary working partner and beneficiary of this activity, with NEMA having a key advisory and approval role.
- (From RM 2) PIE environmental awareness campaign materials produced and transferred to field level to integrate with environmentally sound pilot activity implementation.

#### **4.2 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS**

COBS Support Project developed a program that built permanent capacity in Districts and local populations by working through resident technical staff and key local leaders. A “cascade” training strategy was implemented that used the master trainers for the design of the strategy and the development of training materials. The strategy included:

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<sup>2</sup>This section of the evaluation looked at the capacity-building support to the public environmental awareness and assessment guidelines under ARD-COBS. The Project activities include RM 3 and components of RM1 (EIA for wildlife) and RM2 (PIE), all of which deal with environmental assessment and management capacity-building. Note that significant substantive changes took place between the initial program design and the end of the Project through a TO modification that compelled the scaling down and or elimination of key activities that would have complemented the material covered in this section and led to a greater national-level presence and impact.

1. In-service EIA/EIS training for District officials, central government officials, and environmental inspectors.
2. Environmental management awareness building in Districts; development of manuals.
3. Organization of strategic EA workshops.
4. Support for establishment of a Center for Environment Management Training (CEMT), to conduct the proposed training programs above.
5. Certification of EIA/EIS practitioners.
6. Organization of an environmental management public interest forum.

<b>Summary of COBS Support Project Environmental Training / Awareness Efforts</b>					
<b>District:</b>	<b>Kisoro</b>	<b>Bushenyi</b>	<b>Rukungiri</b>	<b>Kanungu</b>	<b>Total</b>
EA	24	23	18	18	84
1 <sup>st</sup> training (District Staff)	9	8	9	7	33
Subcounty trainees	41	42		32	115+
PEAT estimates	1,495	5,395	2,778 + DTOT	1,659	Est. total: 1,398+ Rukungiri/DTOT

As noted, the original SoW of the TO was refocused shortly after start-up, which had far-reaching repercussions for RM3. As a result, several of the originally proposed capacity-building activities had to be modified or were eliminated. Of those listed, only the first two out of the above six proposed activities above have been successfully carried out. Activity 3, the organization of strategic EA workshops, was not supported by USAID. Activity 4, support for the establishment of the training center, was stalled for lack of an appropriate institution to house and take charge, and was later caught in the budget cut and eliminated. Certification (5) stalled within NEMA and also was affected by the budget cut. NEMA could continue without Project assistance. After the elimination of the original RM3 (ELU), the environmental management forum (6) is not being organized for lack of appropriate institutional support.

#### **4.2.1 Formal EA/EIA training program**

Strategic and budgetary modifications fundamentally altered the overall scope and focus of EA/EIA, public awareness and education, as well as environmental management. As such, the program changed and concentrated on the District-level activities, omitting most of the national-level support to the lead agencies. With marginal involvement of NEMA in the process, the sense of ownership, consolidation, and integration of PIE/EIA/EA into the institutional strategy, structure, and system of NEMA has not happened.

In-service training of District personnel from the four target Districts was undertaken with technical leadership provided by ARD–COBS short-term technical assistance. The approach was based on rigorous international standards, but the training used Kasere Cobalt Company Limited (KCCL) as a local case study. The in-service training in EIA/EA exceeded the set target of 80 officials by 4, bringing the total to 84 District-level officials.

Overall, the understanding and internalization of the EIA/EA/environmental management training was good, and the end of training evaluation revealed that most trainees had attained EIA/EA literacy.

#### **4.2.2 Environmental management public awareness**

This EA training-based activity is summarized in the accompanying table. Education for environmental management was assumed to be a precondition for and complement to successful EIA advocacy at the field level.

*Training of Master Trainers.* The Training of Trainers (ToT) function reached over 150 facilitators (33 Master TOT and up to 120 District TOT—see table, above) from a wide range of backgrounds, from Subcounty extension workers to higher level local officials. Nine members of each District received a three-day training (Entebbe 9/2001). The Master trainers participated in the design of the training strategy and content, preparing District trainers to reach lower levels.

At the Subcounty level, awareness targeted LC 3, CBOs, Parish chiefs, Elders, prominent farmers, and religious leaders. Work plans to reach the 316 Parishes were developed. All PEAT training were conducted in the local language except for a few technical terms on the posters. The Parish training, the final step in the process, reached over 11,000 individuals.

*EA/EIA Support Materials prepared.* The most important product was the EIA trainer's manual and training materials (package of posters). The overall design of the training manual was based on the conviction that proper and effective environmental management at local levels require improved understanding of the ecological principles and awareness of human impact on the environment, thus raising the need for proper environmental management (including EIA and DEAPs) and use. The PEAT training manual was received and piloted in Bushenyi. These manuals were reviewed, approved, printed, distributed to the Districts, and used to reach over 11,000 people.

The training manual covers both communication skills and step-wise delivery of contents. The 21 steps intersected by questions and discussion sessions served to raise specific local concerns/issues and to deepen the learning process. It covers EIA/EA and educates the communities about natural processes in the environment around them. The manual uses a pictorial approach with a few words, and employs flow diagrams to illustrate dynamics within the environment. The use of the "sound" and "unsound" examples with clear and definitive contrasts compels participants to make choices and act on them. In this way, PEAT reinforces the participatory planning process by encouraging local people to act locally and forward the more complex cases to higher levels. A "post-training survey instrument" accompanies the training manual to help assess the effectiveness of the training.

*Environmental Management Public Awareness Program Evaluation Findings.* Environmental management awareness was well-delivered and received by both the trainees and District executives. Trainees interpreted the package as a story about the people and their environment. The training helped highlight the sound and unsound environmental management practices, which provided people with a basis for change. The training was appreciated as engaging, empowering, iterative, and adaptable. The technical officials from various District departments

now have better environmental knowledge and communication skills to assess/study, and are more open to integrating environmental issues related to their core businesses.

The process cascade approach to the training was locally adapted. The contents took into account the landscape aspect of the program, and facilitators were able to relate to the local contexts. The posters emphasized educational rather than prescriptive messages. This seemed to be why they were reported as especially helpful in enhancing retention levels at all ages, even of young children and less literate members of the communities.

The combination of theory and field-based practical work enhanced learning and made the training messages better understood and appreciated. But perhaps most important was the realization by trainees that they could implement the processes on their own. They feel more knowledgeable and therefore confident to take the process forward.

*A wide range of stakeholder groups was reached.* Through TOT, several District and Subcounty official have been trained as facilitators. The multisectoral stakeholder workshops helped raise the importance of environmental issues in all participating departments and levels of society. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Kisoro District says with certainty that all technical people in his District now know what EIA is and will play their part more effectively. At the Parish level, participants included a wide range of stakeholder groups: women, vulnerable (in Kisoro the Batwa), youths, CBOs, religious institutions, and schools.

*Improved human resource for EIA/EA in the District.* Several of the trainees have improved facilitation skills and are now approached to facilitation field processes on a private basis. In Kisoro for instance, when Africare needs a baseline survey done, COBS trainees were recommended. They did a magnificent job, and are now addressed as local consultants/facilitators. The morale and prominence of these officers have been elevated. Overall, the capacity-building process and content have improved the human resource competent to facilitate and scale-up sound environmental management initiatives.

The training has improved the planning capacity of field officials. As part of the District TOT, trainees were given tips on how to prepare field work plans. Trainees particularly appreciated the reminder that they need to plan in minute details. They have applied this concept to the rest of their extension work.

*Increased interaction between District level and local communities about environment issues.* Before the training, local people did not have a basis for raising environmental concerns and did not know the offices to approach in the Districts. The training provided both the reference point (DEO/COBS coordinators) and information about enterprises that require EIAs. More and more cases are being reported to the DEO concerning rural enterprises that could have negative environmental consequences. Although not all are valid, the fact that people raise these concerns represents progress.

There has been a remarkable change in the MTOT and District TOT. Their attitudes, convictions, sense of urgency with regard to environmental issues, and commitment to the process have been a source of pride for the District leaders. However, with the closing of COBS, direct

support in terms of allowances, and transport, there is fear that these good achievements may be frustrated in the future.

*Increased interest in and demand for environmental training.* In Bugongi Subcounty, Lunyinya village Kisoro women are demanding training on soil management and production mitigation for millet. The interest and number of farmers attending training have increased. As noted below, in Bushenyi 108 farmers attended the model farmers training on their own. Although only 10 farmers were selected for training as model farmers, many more farmers attended the training. For instance in Bushenyi, averages of 4 extra farmers participated in the training. Hence, in addition to the target of 270 farmers, 108 more farmers attended the training.

*People are more receptive to soils and water conservation measures by NGOs.* To quote “we realized we were reaping without tending the soil base.” Several have embraced organic farming: mulching, composite making, and agroforestry beyond the pilots.

#### **4.2.3 Other EA/EIA support activities**

The most important activities carried out were the program to certify EIA/EIS practitioners and the development of EIA guidelines.

*Certification of EIA/EIS practitioners.* COBS Support Project provided assistance toward the development of a certification program for private sector EIA practitioners through the intended creation of a CEMT. Both CEMT and the certification program were started but were not completed. They were eventually dropped after the budget for the Project was reduced

*Development of EIA/EIS manual.* An EIA manual was developed and prepared for use by practitioners in multiple sectors. At the time of the evaluation, the draft manual was being prepared for publication and release. It is intended to serve as base reference for public sector institutions and will provide a written blueprint for much of what was intended to be accomplished through the creation of ELUs in the component dropped from the original TO. *It is not possible to gauge the eventual impact and use of the manual, but its production represents a substantial output.* The manual traces the history of EIA in Uganda, and includes recommended processes and procedures, such as a checklist vital for assessing and devising mitigation measures. The manual was finalized by June 2002, underwent final internal review by NEMA, which is now preparing its publication and distribution with ARD–COBS support.

*Development of EIA sectoral guidelines.* A local consultant from Environmental Management Associates was hired in March 2001 to facilitate and develop the wildlife sectoral EIA guidelines. Extensive consultations with various stakeholders in Kampala and several field visits with UWA staff to PA and surrounding Districts in eastern, southwestern, and northern Uganda were carried out.

*Implementation of EIA in UWA.* The UWA EA/EIA sector guidelines were completed but have not been approved by NEMA. The process was consultative, and the result is a set of user-friendly guidelines that are simple, straightforward, and largely adequate for most proposed activities anticipated in the PA GMPs. Although not yet assimilated, UWA has carried out some EIA in QE and MFNP using the general guidelines under NEMA. Reports are not yet out. UWA also requires that all private investors in PA perform EIA as part of the development process.

UWA has not yet systematically integrated EIA into the GMPs. For example, MFNP GMP includes an *Environmental Considerations Report* that considers possible impacts and mitigation measures but does not substitute for activity-specific reviews, as appropriate. LMNP GMP does not include this section.

#### **4.2.4 Public information and education**

The original purpose of the overall PIE communication strategy was to raise public awareness and propagate the EAPs. This activity was intended to support UWA, NEMA, and ECOTRUST, as well as the targeted Districts. However, project refocusing meant that the scope of coverage and depth of PIE was reduced. With cross-sectoral environmental management activities scaled back, the general need to support national-level training in this subject was no longer pressing, and the comprehensive information and education support was scaled back to a more limited support function for the pilot implementation activities described in Section 3.0.

*Development of PIE Program.* PIE task forces were formed in all four Districts. They drew membership from DEAP, EIA/EA facilitators, and District Information Officers. A workshop was held to review E/NR PIE activities and strategy. PIE training design, planning, and materials were completed in the first quarter of 2002. The materials cover the basic communication strategies (e.g., theater, posters, radio, etc.). The training modules cover information generation, message formulation, research and analysis, information dissemination, and reviews. Research was carried out in each District to assess media and messages. Posters, radio spots, and village-theater emerged as most suitable for information dissemination in the Districts. The workshop made plans to take the training to Parish levels. A planning meeting in Mbarara recommended that for a start PIE be integrated into the pilots of the four Districts:

- Kisoro: Management and conservation of lakeshore wetlands in Muhora Subcounty.
- Rukungiri: Increasing tree cover in Nyarushagyeme Subcounty.
- Bushenyi: Soil and water conservation in landslide-prone areas of Nyabubaare, Kamuhanga, and Ryeru Subcounties.
- Kanungu: Managing problem animals in Kihiihi and Nyamirama Subcounties.

The use of local FM radios, music, and drama groups are increasing. In Kisoro, Bushenyi, and Kanungu local people were actively listening to the radio program and several requests for specific topics are beginning to come in.

*Behavior is changing.* The PIE training helped diversify communication strategies at the District and lower levels and has greatly increased the catchments areas to beyond the Districts and pilot areas. Several environmental cases received by the DEO are related to the messages aired through the radio and drama programs. The supported pilots have taken root; there is notable increase in the demand especially for tree seedlings cross the Districts. In Kisoro, local people have implemented the by-law to leave at least 3 m of uncultivated land around the protected lake. They suspended fishing from the restocked lake until the stock has built up.

### 4.3 CONCLUSIONS

- PIE, EIA, and PEAT training all promoted interpersonal and department communication, which increased commitment to achieve a common goal: environment awareness.
- Training helped improve recognition of the Environment Department. DEOs are now recognized, and although the operational budgets remain small, the multidisciplinary approach to training enlightened officers in the other departments now who freely collaborate. Training thus contributed to mainstreaming. Departments have accepted to integrate certain environmental issues in their core business. The presence of CARE-COBS Support Project coordinators reinforced this tendency.
- Increase in the number of locally initiated environmental projects. Several CBOs in the Districts have refocused their activities to address environmental issues. In Kisoro for example, five CBOs attempted to develop environmentally focused proposals. And although not all received funding from ECOTRUST, the interest is there.
- The multidisciplinary team added value to the facilitation and learning process. Both the facilitators and trainees learned. It was important and morale-boosting for individual facilitators to go out in teams and channel their energies toward a single goal. And although they had their specific specialties, these too were channeled to inform the learning process.
- Although progress has been made, it is not possible to talk about impact or continuity for many of the outputs. The EIA/EA processes started slowly, stalled for a while for some components, and then rushed toward the end. As a result, most of the outputs have been delivered late, leaving little time for implementation and lesson learning.
- The isolation of PIE from the other awareness processes renders its good intended function less visible. Integration of related outputs targeted at the same audience need to happen while at the drawing board, to avoid being derailed for personal motives.
- If major strategic changes must occur during the life of a multistakeholder project, communication and joint analysis of implications and possible mitigation should be a must.
- Institutional differences and perceptions are important for the success of interinstitutional deliberations. In the case of COBS, the assumption that MUIENR and NEMA would be interested and be accepted by all actors as lead institutions for CEMT and certification of EIA, without clear understanding (or taking into account) of the institutional cultures and preferences of potential partners. Many of the delays in the progress on some of the outputs that were eliminated stem from institutional culture and preferences that should have been dealt with early in the Project life.
- There is urgent need for environmentally related income-generating activities. Environmental awareness has been raised, and people want to do something about the current state of their environments. However, there is great limitation in terms of alternatives and means. For instance, the small and fragmented land holdings in Kisoro make tree planting, use of organic manure, and practicing fallow difficult. The poor increasingly face tougher choices with regard to current environmental mitigation measures.

#### 4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PIE, EIA/EA, and general awareness training and campaigns should be integrated into a single coherent package thus reducing duplication of efforts and resources. The initial requirement for a central material development, support, coordination, and revision of messages is needed to ensure quality, cross learning, and linkage to the national level.
2. There is need for continual technical and financial support to the processes. Most of the PEAT happened in the last year of COBS support. And although considerable capacity has been built, there is great need for continued technical and financial support until such a time as sustainability is ensured. The in-service training and PEAT should not be a one-off event. There are changes in political leaders, transfer of technical officers, and scaling-up of good practices to other areas, all of which require more in-service events for environmental issues to remain key in the development of Uganda. Training will keep facilitators at the cutting-edge of environmental issues.
3. A support agency like CARE needs to help local government in the four Districts devise a mechanism of tapping and effectively benefiting from incoming development support. Agencies like AFRICARE that may need technical expertise and already mobilized communities for support and implementation will require guidance on where and through which institutions they should implement environmental projects. This calls for proper and proactive planning on the part of local leader in the District to provide guidance to new investors and to ensure that already mobilized communities are supported for implementation, and that there is equitable access to development opportunities by all communities.
4. There is need for translating and interpreting of educational materials into languages local people understand and in which they can easily express themselves.
5. Future programming including SO7 should employ strategies that link both the technical and political wings of the District.
6. There should be a proper accreditation of EIA/EA practitioners. Handing over manuals and other resources without facilitating and ensuring proper integration is not enough to ensure continuity. NEMA should take the post-COBS lead (this reinforces the human resource to effectively advocate and facilitate sound environmental planning) and ensure that there are standards and quality control measures for EIA/EA for all practitioners.

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## SECTION 5.0

### RM4: SPECIAL BIODIVERSITY SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

#### 5.1 SPECIAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTED

This Results Module is not technically or functionally equivalent to the others in the sense that activities undertaken responded on an ad hoc basis to conservation-related support needs of SO2 (and SO7) that USAID identified over the life of the COBS Support activity. There are no classic results, indicators, nor targets against which to assess performance. From an evaluation standpoint, the team documented only what was accomplished and attempted to assess whether this structured mechanism for flexibility functioned as intended. ARD–COBS appeared responsive in carrying out requested studies and activities. The particular staff at the client institution was no longer in-country, but there was no apparent dissatisfaction with the results of using this mechanism for safeguarding flexibility

Specific outputs under RM4 ARD–COBS included:

- Consultation to produce a *Shea Marketing Study* as an input to a program that USAID did not develop further.
- A threats and opportunities study (input to ISP).
- Examination of environmental aspects to nonconditional sector grants to Subcounties to assist in the transfer of COBS Support approaches to Uganda's programs for supporting decentralized rural development.
- Consideration and consultation over potential support to the forestry sector.
- Support to ECOTRUST.

Institutional support to ECOTRUST provided an exception to the general tendency to use this component on a punctual basis. ECOTRUST's need was identified early and addressed over the life of the contract, almost as an additional stand-alone component. It is discussed below. As part of managing the final-year budget reductions, new activities were not undertaken, but direct technical support from the ARD–COBS in-country team continued. Interestingly, ECOTRUST, which had been the beneficiary of earlier support, found its position reversed as it began providing operational support to COBS Support Project initiatives such as plan implementation in Districts and in QEPA. Moreover, as an indication of satisfaction, with the technical assistance COBS Support Project provided, ECOTRUST directly contracted the same principle institutional support consultant to continue working with the organization.

#### 5.2 ECOTRUST AND THE COBS SUPPORT PROJECT

##### 5.2.1 Problem statement

Under the USAID strategy, one of the challenges was to successfully achieve the graduation and transformation of an existing SO2 GMU into an autonomous grant-making NGO, ECOTRUST. The transition process was put forth in three phases, progressing from a first phase of punctual funding for formal separation, a second phase of institutional capacity-building, and a third phase of continuing activity based on success of the first two phases. ARD–COBS sought to ensure that USAID was confident to establish a cooperative agreement with an independent

ECOTRUST. Independence implied financial diversification, in itself implying a need for ECOTRUST to evolve to the point of soliciting adequate and diversified funding.

### 5.2.2 Findings and Analysis

ARD provided critical technical assistance, institutional guidance, and mentoring that was instrumental in ECOTRUST surviving a difficult transition from USAID GMU to a distinct, legally independent registered Ugandan NGO. In practice and in actual operation, ECOTRUST continues to be closely associated with USAID activities and is seen as funding vehicle for USAID projects. The organization is aware of the need to diversify its institutional support base, but its success in raising funds beyond USAID's backing has been limited to date.

The evaluation team found that ARD-COBS has invested substantial energy and funding of technical assistance to help ECOTRUST overcome the two most important obstacles to obtaining this viability: establish a clear institutional identity and diversify its sources of funding and support. ARD responded with commitment to the Transitional Task Force request to step in and assist ECOTRUST toward its vision of becoming an endowed and diversely supported foundation poised to further its autonomous environment, natural resource, and sustainable development agenda.

This support, geared especially to meeting Phase I transition benchmarks, consisted of:

- Start-up support: Orientation with Board, Action Plan workshop.
- Strategic Planning and Team building: Recruitment staff development.
- Capacity-building: Administrative, technical, and financial management systems developed with medium-term ARD technical assistance; business plan (Ayee 2001) and grants manual.
- Facilitating ECOTRUST partnerships: Introduction to NGO community in southwestern Uganda, integration with DEAP process at Subcounty level, technical assistance to define parameters of national park plan implementation.

ARD technical assistance to ECOTRUST was limited to a final consultancy with the cut in ARD-COBS funding, but institutional strengthening continues through joint support to common partners working to conserve biodiversity and improve natural resource management in USAID's COBS target regions. As an indication of the value of the assistance, ECOTRUST used its own monies to finance the same STTA that ARD-COBS had made available.

ECOTRUST's quest to establish autonomy is jeopardized as USAID shifts direction. ECOTRUST is expected to respond under the Phase II cooperative agreement that provides the bulk of ECOTRUST's funding. Much of the new USAID ISP only mutedly corresponds to ECOTRUST's vision and foundation documents, a concern that has already surfaced within the organization.

The evaluation team observed that GoU partners now perceive the organization as the funding body for certain persistent elements of the COBS Support Project's original mandate for implementation of the DEAPs, SEAPs, PEAPs, GMPs, and AOPs. The refocusing and budget cuts that affected ARD *implementation* support to targeted Districts and PA resulted, at a late stage of COBS Support Project, in a subset of proposed outputs being shifted from ARD contract to ECOTRUST cooperative agreement funding. Follow-through on certain COBS Support

Project activities is important both to achieving key SO2 results and in maintaining USAID's integrity in the eyes of its Ugandan partners, but none are finding the funding process smooth. Some, especially central GoU partners including NEMA and UWA, express the sentiment that USAID has placed Uganda's young Environmental Conservation Trust in what appears as an untenable and inappropriate intermediary position.

Finally, as external interest in ECOTRUST as vehicle for establishing land trusts appeared significant, ARD-COBS worked with ECOTRUST to identify and enlist World Land Trust as a potential partner and arrange for a staff member to serve as a ARD-COBS consultant in this area. Substantive guidance was provided. A partnering MOU is in preparation that would reinforce the land acquisition and conservation management functions as ECOTRUST matures and such need expands. They executed an initial action venture with the World Wildlife Federation in the Rwenzori area. The issue and challenge parallel those of other ECOTRUST programs—a dearth of field-level organizations with whom to partner. Just as it is not in ECOTRUST's capacity nor interest to directly implement pilot programs, it is not (at least currently) in their interest to manage or comanage purchased lands.

### **5.3 CONCLUSION**

ECOTRUST, building on its ARD-COBS support, has established itself a unique niche with the mandate, personnel, and systems that give it potential to catalyze environmentally sustainable development across a wide range of potential intervention partners.

Despite progress, ECOTRUST's institutional viability is still fragile, and if its grants funding becomes too narrowly linked to USAID's SO7 agenda, its ability to develop independently may be delayed or undermined.

ECOTRUST's role almost as stand-in for USAID (by funding COBS Support Project DEAP pilots and GMP implementation) risks reinforcing the perception of ECOTRUST's integration with and dependency on USAID.

To properly diversify its base, a proactive approach to marketing several types of services (grant administration, NGO program implementation *and capacity-building*, land acquisition, etc.) needs to be adopted.

### **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

USAID, in as direct a manner as possible, should provide ECOTRUST with marketing and business development support to assist in a necessary diversification of funding support and donor base.

ECOTRUST needs to “internalize” the support role it has taken on through its joint and post-COBS Support Project implementation, using the opportunity to better profile its identity and operating modalities with respect to local government, park management, and national-level institutions.

SO7 should include provision for pass-through grants to central and decentralized government and parastatal organizations that have the capacity to maintain segregated accounts. Potential local NGO partners are limited, and require more capacity-building than ECOTRUST—as a young institution itself—is capable of providing. Forging partnerships with local govern-

s a young institution itself—is capable of providing. Forging partnerships with local government may be the best way to engage CBOs and civil society.

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## SECTION 6.0

### RESULTS MODULE 5: ACTIVITY COORDINATION AND ADMINISTRATION

#### 6.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Results Module 5 is not really a *Results Module*, but the manner in which the development assistance was organized and administered has much to do with the level of achievement of results. This section of the report thus assesses certain characteristics of Project management, of teaming arrangements, or relationships with partners and of oversight and technical coordination from the USAID side. Of particular interest is an effort to distinguish some effects of the USAID refocusing that took place early in the Project (referred to repeatedly throughout the text).

#### 6.2 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

##### 6.2.1 Project management unit and organization

*Project Management was effective.* The COBS Support Project Chief of Party (CoP) heads the Project Management Unit (PMU) operates from Kampala, but provided substantial autonomy to technical assistance in each of the major support areas—ECOTRUST, DEAP process, UWA institutional development. Routine administration operated in the background to facilitate development objectives as observed in the approval of the Kanungu DEAP and in the stakeholder review of the Lake Mburo National Park GMP. Field reports, periodic reports, consultant recruitment, and document production all favored smooth Project implementation (other than an “allowances” issue that took some time to resolve).

For the DEAP process, COBS Support Project’s field team of full-time Project staff, led by the Environment Planning Technical Adviser (EPTA), is based in the Districts and supported on one occasion by short-term consultants. Effective delegation of responsibility encouraged the field team, led by the EPTA, to significantly leverage a limited field presence in the DEAP process. The COBS Support Project DEAP Coordinators (DEAP/Cs) who oversee the DEAP process in each District are highly motivated and independent. They were able to translate this non-directive management style into an empowering environment within the Districts themselves. This contributed to engaging staff at progressively lower levels, and this is what tended to establish ownership rapidly but profoundly.

In partner institutions receiving technical assistance such as UWA and ECOTRUST, Project management was responsive and sensitive to the organizations’ needs and concerns. At the level of direct implementation support, the DEAP/Cs and UWA planning unit staff were closely integrated with their immediate colleagues more than with Project structures. UWAPU–COBS planners were recruited from the outset to operate as UWA “staff,” which made their eventual integration easy. In some cases, consultant selection such as for UWA EIA guidelines was left to the recipient organization. In other cases, the ARD–CARE team drew on its collective resources to identify the appropriate outside resource.

The ARD–CARE partnership was successful and brought in strengths from both organizations collegially and in a noncompetitive team context. For example, ARD had a lead role on PA planning, but CARE contributed substantially to the transition to plan implementation, largely through related projects such as the Integrated Lake Management Project (DfID), the QEPA

Community Conservation Project (DANIDA), and others. CARE's involvement in other non-COBS activities helped clarify the challenges to mainstreaming environment in the overall development agenda and facilitated two-way communication with the broader debate on local government and decentralization. CARE's institutional presence provided some oversight and information-sharing on broader rural development concerns. Their use of "visioning" as a planning concept, which attracted such interest in the DEAP/SEAP process, resulted from a timely and pertinent contribution of a CARE consultant (Lightfoot 2001); it seems to be one of the tools encouraging District chairmen and technical committees to adopt ARD-CARE approaches in sectors other than the environment.

Contractual management issues between ARD home office management and CARE never were substantial enough to affect harmonious relations in day-to-day implementation. CARE administrative and financial processing delays sometimes frustrated ARD's ability to make forward projections. Both CARE and ARD discuss the collaboration in positive terms and, on the basis of their mutual satisfaction with the partnership, continue to pursue other opportunities jointly. The only significant issue detected related to CARE's unwillingness to staff up completely for the DEAP program until the USAID refocusing exercise had clarified the terms of the (eventually) revised TO (see below).

*Relations with Ugandan institutions were generally good.* In the EAP activities, the team encountered only positive comments on the COBS Support team. Several went so far as to say "we are COBS, so of course we like COBS." This support grew out of the Project's explicit decision to work through existing institutions despite challenges—and there were some. Ugandan partner institutions are in a stronger position to continue fulfilling responsibilities in the types of programs that fell under the COBS purview (such as the mountain gorilla conservation support).

*Insufficient integration of ARD-COBS and District work calendars and travel provisions.* Although the Project's support model ensured that the Project was integrated into the District structures, the "rhythm of work" of the Project may appear to have, at certain times, been constrained by differences in organizational "cultures." There were complaints from the District officials in the LTF about housing them in expensive hotels and paying them small allowances, until it was agreed that the LTF members would have to find their own accommodation while in areas such as Kampala. During Q11 (1 April–30 June 2002), the implementation of DEAP-related activities was delayed by unforeseen circumstances, such as the unavailability of local government staff to work on previously planned PIA and PIE. Although commitment to these activities was planned with the local government staff, many had to address other District priorities, especially the updating of the DDP for the financial year 2002/3, which required the preparation of budget framework papers, annual work plans, and budgets. Local government staff support for completion of local elections and establishment of the new District councils also consumed significant amount of time when the COBS Project would also be looking for it.

The two central government partners, NEMA and UWA, notwithstanding preference for direct funding, appreciated the COBS effort. The UWAPU staff, as most direct recipients of assistance, was most particularly positive. At the higher level, relations between UWA and donors including COBS rose and fell over the Project; at one time, the UWA's decisions disrupted the planned flow of technical assistance and capacity building. With new leadership, the focus is on

accomplishments, consolidating progress, and preparing to shift to ECOTRUST follow-on support and seeking wider post-COBS support for GMP implementation. It is a smooth closeout.

In NEMA's case, although there are no major issues, involvement over the life of Project has been less than anticipated. Much of this is related to USAID-level issues discussed below. The key outstanding issue is the degree to which some of the COBS Support Project accomplishments will be recognized, adopted, and replicated across non-COBS Districts.

### **6.2.2 USAID strategic refocusing: Implications for the COBS Support Project**

The PFE SOW asks what activities were not accomplished that were beyond the control of the contractor. Clearly, the most important factor was the decision made almost simultaneously with Project start up to redefine its strategic focus. This entailed greater concern with field-level impacts, including household incomes under environmentally sustainable agricultural systems. The impact of this shift in strategic thinking and planning at the Mission level, or refocusing, produced substantial changes in the COBS Support TO, which at that time, had been recently signed. Moreover, ARD's proposal was attached to the original TO; thus, implied contractual obligations were inconsistent with the modified mandate. From the contractor's perspective, delays by USAID in formally modifying the TO created frustration and uncertainty.

Refocusing's major direct impact on the COBS Support Project can be summarized:

- Elimination of the original RM3, which would have supported integrating environmental management concerns into a wide range of national-level branches of government through ELUs.
- More concern with GMP implementation.
- Reduction in the number and geographic coverage of District DEAPS.
- Greater attention to field partners and less focus on central-level institutions.
- Confusion in ARD-CARE about their eventual role, prompting CARE to delay start-up of some activities.

## **6.3 CONCLUSIONS**

Overall, the PFE validates the capacity-building principles used by the ARD-CARE team in implementing the COBS Support Project as being exceptionally efficient at building ownership and transferring processes and practices that will affect the environment and people's well-being over time.

By and large, the potential substantive benefits of refocusing appear to be offset by the associated confusion, uncertainty, and interruption in programming experienced by partner organizations, the SO2 extended team, and to ARD-COBS and other implementing partners. The process extended over a significant portion of the implementation period and was characterized by delays after start-up, uncertainty over work plans, and other factors. (This evaluation did not assess the overall SO2, but such a broader retrospective SO assessment might be useful for the integration of SO2 concerns into the activity programming under the new SO7.)

The PFE did sense a reluctance of the Project to take on certain implementation activities earlier and with greater conviction prior to a finalized TO amendment. This could have minimized the sense that there is a gap with COBS closing down; but to some extent, the short time frame of the TO limited what program elements could be responsibly undertaken.

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## 7.0 SUSTAINABILITY AND IMPACT

The PFE was not intended to be a comprehensive effort to measure the institutional capacities of the key recipients of the project's investments. The preceding sections documented in some detail the specific changes introduced by this capacity-building effort. In this section, we attempt to assess the sustainability of these organizational changes and their likely impact. At the highest level, the COBS Program sought to *"conserve critical ecosystems to sustain biological diversity and to enhance benefits to society."* Achieving this strategic objective is dependent on the ARD-COBS-supported institutions carrying forward with the necessary financial and human resources, thus continuing to develop and implement the plans that lead to environmentally positive changes in people's behaviors. This, in turn, produces the biophysical changes that ultimately add up to protect critical ecosystems and the biodiversity they contain.

### 7.1 SUSTAINABILITY

The UWA has committed to staffing a planning unit that the evaluation argues is already carrying out autonomously, the system of GMP that it jointly developed with COBS support. The system has been adopted not only for "COBS" PAs, but for the country's entire wildlife PA system. Given the 10-year cycle for plan renewal, the UWAPU human resources are adequate to continue this task. All financial responsibility for basic funding of this unit has been internalized. As tourism and UWA revenues increase over time, the unit can be expected to achieve more independence from donor program support. At least as important in terms of sustainable changes in human resources, is UWA's system-wide adoption of AOPs, which engage all important staff throughout the PA System and at headquarters. The AOP set of tools increases UWA's efficiency and allows programs to expand or contract based on available funds.

Through NEMA, COBS Support Project engaged local government and its development and civil society partners to achieve comprehensive planning and progress in mainstreaming environmental concerns in the COBS target Districts of southwestern Uganda. It is clear the human resources, both political and technical, within Districts, Subcounties, and Parishes have been engaged in a participatory process that links inextricably with the overall move toward decentralization in the country. It is difficult for the team to assess the financial sustainability of the EAP process since it is so integrally bound with larger issues of District and local finance. It is safe to say that financial resources available to Districts are significant and varied. The integration of environment into the overall District development plans bodes well for sustained financing for program implementation that leads to environmental conservation practices, even in the heavily populated portions of the region. Integrating environment with other sectors through EAPs paves the way for both GoU and donor programs to continue program financing to committed human resource base. Africare's recent fusion of the productive and natural resource components of its Food Security Initiative provides an example.

The PFE characterizes the EAP service delivery model as remarkably successful, and it is recognized as such by NEMA. Without the Project structure in place, it is difficult to gauge how well the model will be transferred to other Districts, despite its stature as the basis for a "Best Practices" guide to DEAP implementation. Some continued shepherding of the DEAP model is called for if the COBS investment is to be maximized. The fact that CARE-Uganda has a long-standing presence in the country may be helpful in this regard.

The participatory planning and visioning approaches that attracted such interest across various sectors at the District level also pose a development challenge related to sustainability. The process was so engaging and participatory that to carry out an equivalent process for each sector could well overload the planning functions of local government, not to mention the constituents' patience and capacity to absorb. It is difficult to imagine, for example, that the Parish walks could be repeated for each productive sector. Relative to mainstreaming, further attention to cross-sectoral efficiencies in finance and human resources could enhance sustainability.

The evaluation team noted variance in the planning cycles of its two core areas: DEAPs on 3-year rotation and GMPs on a 10-year cycle. It is quite likely that additional sectors impose yet other variance in their requirements for periodic planning. This issue was beyond the scope of the evaluation, but it suggests that a better understanding of the potentials for harmonization would be useful in general, and in particular, for USAID's local government and upcoming SO7 program activities. Also, it is not clear that the three-year review requirement of the NES for DEAP implies that the same fundamental planning exercise developed and engendered under the COBS Support Project would be necessary. Much will depend on an assessment of the next years of implementation and of the utility of the M&E system that was put into place. Perhaps there is scope for a "DEAP-lite" process that could carry the commitment to environment and EAP implementation beyond the three-year period. Again, this might enhance the long-term impact of the COBS' DEAP model.

NEMA's role in DEAP sustainability is important. The types of issues raised by the above questions about the DEAP process, however, are properly the subject of national-level dialogue as policies, planning, and integration need to be agreed upon across parties. With the refocusing, COBS Support Project own capacity-building efforts affected NEMA more indirectly than envisioned in the original Task Order. COBS Support Project thus did not substantially alter NEMA administrative and support systems, its organizational culture, nor the resources, human and financial, with which NEMA pursues its objectives. What the project did do was arm NEMA with an improved set of technical tools both for DEAP preparation and for advancing its mandate for EA/EIA. NEMA appreciates these and is putting them to use. The office itself depends heavily on external funding, so some issues of long-term sustainability rely on underlying assumptions to the COBS program that go beyond project review but continue to be relevant to future programming of development assistance. In NEMA's view, for SO7 implementation not to build on identified priorities would be a "disaster."

ECOTRUST has benefited in all key areas of organizational development: *administrative and support systems* (including staff recruitment); *technical* (including program planning and service delivery); *organizational culture* (clarity of vision, work environment, external relations), and *resources* (human and financial). In a sense, ECOTRUST is poised to provide the institutional link to consolidate the advances in UWA and the Districts. The hand-over of certain ongoing programs represents a challenge to ECOTRUST to put these gains from ARD-COBS technical assistance to practice. ECOTRUST success increases the likelihood that resources for PA and DEAP planning and plan implementation will be mobilized. This type of success would validate ECOTRUST and increase the opportunities for it to move beyond the overreliance on USAID discussed in Section 6.0.

## 7.2 IMPACT

The evaluation team was asked to assess impact in terms of whether the beneficiaries are using the skills and knowledge they have gained. We have attempted to document capacity-building effectiveness in the individual RM sections, and note examples of skills being applied. Below we have isolated a number of additional examples that particularly point to direct and indirect changes in ENR practices that are associated with Project activities. Attribution for the eventual impacts will never be certain, so it is important to underscore the basis for these “people-level” impacts. The underlying factors are presented to lay the basis for describing what are essentially a set of “before-and-after” comparisons.

1. *Soundness of interventions.* The ARD-COBS Project always tested their instruments and piloted implementation activities before any were rolled out across the target Districts. This process of field-testing guidelines, manuals, and procedures and piloting of implementation activities was, although time-consuming, a vital and good iterative process that allowed the identification of weaknesses and lessons’ learned before going out to full implementation. Second, because it involved several Parishes and Subcounties working together in the DEAP process, it enabled the different Parishes and Subcounties to organize themselves along common themes and activities that not only helped improve their livelihoods, but also brought people together. This coming together is a solid basis for supporting development interventions, and makes possible opportunities for external funding, especially from donors.
2. *Efficient grass-roots strategy.* The DEAP process was reviewed and improved, which reduced amount of time and resources spent in the EAP process. The participatory and consultative approach process that started at the Parish obtained a buy-in at higher levels on the importance of participation.
3. *Built ownership to enhance impact.* The participatory DEAP process not only cultivated technical and political commitment to the DEAP process from the local government, it also increased environmental awareness at all levels in the District and generated massive data that later served as a point of reference for higher level EAP, including the SEAPs and DEAPs. The DEAP process, which was supported by COBS Support Project, provided Parish, Subcounty, and District officials in the target Districts with useful planning experiences that they are using in their general development planning processes through other departments/sectors in the Districts. EAPs are already guiding sustainable use of natural resources, which will contribute to reduction of pressure on sensitive assets. In Kisoro for example, convergence of DEAP and DDP led to banning of fishing activities on Lake Chahafi following restocking the lake with fish fries provided under a development grant to the Murora Subcounty through the DDP.
4. *Built capacity to ensure sustainability.* COBS Support Project activities were appropriately integrated in the structures of the target Districts. A formal request for the targets Districts to provide office space for COBS Support Project District DEAP teams was made by NEMA in 2000, to which the CAOs duly obliged. In Bushenyi, Kisoro, and Rukungiri, the Project helped refurbish office premises that were shared with the DEOs. The District staff, especially the DEOs and members of the DTFs, drawn from the DTPC, took the lead in mobili-

zation of local councils and the communities in the preparation of EAPs and later implementation of EAP priorities. The project and its field staff took a back-stage and maintained a very low visibility. No parallel structures were created, since the Project preferred to work through existing structures. This has been a more enduring capacity-building process, which will benefit the target Districts for a long time even after the Project has been closed. Withdrawal from the District toward the end of the Project will not hurt continuation of DEAP implementation activities already underway, because technical and management capacity as well as financial resources are adequate (since the COBS through ECOTRUST has expressed willingness to follow through on activities already underway). Additional EAP priorities in target Districts are likely to be affected because support to Districts to build fund-raising capacity was not adequately built.

5. *Motivated its partners.* The sense of ownership of the activities that the COBS Support Project was very high. Both the Subcounties and Districts were committed to further implementation after the Project closed. Pilot implementation activities had been selected because they presented opportunities for the District and Subcounties to leverage funding from their own local sources. The impact of the Project will remain long after it closes.

**People-level impacts** have begun to appear, as evident in the following anecdotal examples. Advocacy and civil pressure for environmental issues, although still nascent, increased through the Project's accomplishments.

- *Communities begin to advocate for proper application of EIA, review, and mitigation.* In Kisoro one investor was trying to extract chalk along the Kako River in Busanza Parish. On the basis of ARD-COBS awareness training, local people were concerned that this would pollute the river. Members of the community contacted the DEO and the program facilitators. This led to NEMA officially asking the investor to carry out a proper EIA and mitigation measures.
- Bushenyi had over 30 recent cases for environmental review covering a wide range of issues such as petrol stations, wetlands drainage, coffee factory, and bush burning. Some farmers have approached the DEO to ask for alternative land-clearing strategy for millet and sorghum, which they believe need ash (hence burning) to grow.
- *Demand for law enforcement.* Several villages are demanding that wetlands by-law be developed and enforced. In one Subcounty (Bugongi), the local people blocked all the drainage canals of the main swamp in the community that had been drained for agriculture. Local people in Bushenyi tried to enforce the by-law to refilling *murrum* pits after major excavation.
- *Communities are beginning to cooperate with PA management.* For example, they have begun to report concessionaires involved in illegal activities (Kyambura). Boundary markers and limits are being formally respected in many areas and, where contested (Lake Mburo, some sections of the QEPA boundary), new institutions are being used to address conflicts.
- *The training has strengthened the position of the local Parish-level environmental committees.* Initially, the environment office had no clear roles and responsibilities. A lot has changed as a result of the environmental awareness training. The office has gained respect as more and more cases are referred to them, trainees have a clearer perception of their roles and respon-

sibilities, and, most important, they are facilitating several local interventions. Because there were no funds involved, the majority of the local officers have been women. There was some concern reported that the next elections will see more men standing for membership on local environmental committees. This suggests both an area of concern from a gender standpoint, as well as the enhanced prestige and importance of the office and the community view of environmental issues.

- *Local participation in community meetings has improved.* More and more people turn up and actively engage in the discussions and raise environmental concerns. Several people have expressed concerns about the relaxation in environmental laws, and appreciation of the roles of local government to enforce by-laws has improved. A herbalist in Kanungu raised a concern about the depletion of the wild medicinal plants and the need to preserve some ecosystems.
- *Trainers of training and other involved government officials are themselves local role models* as a result of internalizing the subject matter. One extension worker in Bushenyi dreaded field-work because he was not confident in communicating. After the training, he gained confidence: "I used to dictate but now we employ participatory approaches and it is a learning process for all involved." An agricultural extension worker in Bushenyi used to overstock, leading to overgrazing. After the training, he sold off some animals and realizes that those that remain look better. In addition, he has started implementing the soil conservation measures.
- *Increased demand for inputs toward environmental mitigation/restoration measures.* In Rukungiri, all Parish headquarters are to plant trees as example to households, and all development plans have tree planting as a priority. The demand for tree seedlings in Kanungu has increased to the extent that one trained officer who had a coffee nursery switched his own private nursery to seedlings of species used in the reforestation activities.

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## 8.0 LESSONS LEARNED

By evaluating what was and what was not accomplished, the PFE attempts to capture some of the salient lessons learned. We expect that they will retain their relevance moving forward as the SO7 expands the involvement of civil society and the private sector in the conservation and use of Western Uganda's critical and biologically rich landscapes.

- *Focusing on opportunities, not constraints*, contributed immensely to the Project's level of success. In particular, vision-based planning led to rapid and widespread stakeholder buy-in. Visioning was used at the subregional level to instill a sense of positive outcome toward which actors saw the landscape evolving at the conclusion of successful implementation. Actions then become steps toward this endpoint. SO7 will grapple with similar challenges of local land use such as erosion and watershed degradation. Such exercises can be tailored to multiple levels from farmer and village organizations to national strategic and policy efforts.
- *Overall program coordination is critical to success*. For effective partnership and collaboration, institutional cultures need to be analyzed and any negative implications dealt with early in the partnership. Monitoring coordination structures such as an extended SO team should be ensured. A lack of clarity in the Project's mandate created delays and uncertainty that could have been avoided by better communication and a formalized structure of setting and affirming operating parameters for the Project. Field activities under SO7 will likely involve groupings of distinct projects, government and non-government partners, providers of technology or services, and entrepreneurs. This complexity suggests a need for coordinating structures at several levels will need to be developed. Clear contractual responsibilities and approved monitoring plans should underlie efforts to achieve interinstitutional synergies.
- *Building the institutions is key to long-term success*. COBS focused on strengthening government institutions and planning. With the attention given to achieving higher level (biophysical and income) results, institutional development is often seen as an intermediate process and is given reduced attention in development efforts. COBS Support Project demonstrated the importance of creating an enabling institutional environment. It showed that by focusing on core functions, significant change can be engendered with limited resources and in a relatively short period of time. Sustainable capacity-building activities for environment management are difficult to assess, but absent enabling policy and regulatory and technical support institutions, private sector initiatives may not achieve intended conservation objectives. SO7 appears to make limited provision for support to government, despite recognizing the important residual role that only government institutions can play. COBS Support Project experience would suggest that funding government participation in the natural resource enterprises and partnerships can both enhance success and build on the recently developed capacities.
- *Avoiding parallel structures helps transfer ownership and makes a real difference*. COBS Support Project integrating of Project activities into District technical structures can help to shield Project facilities and resources from pressures for favors by politicians, and prevent them from disappearing with termination of a project. The buy-in and ownership of protected area and local government partners under COBS is a direct outgrowth of encouraging these

institutions to directly implement the program and equipping them with the necessary justifiable resources. As SO7 puts structures into place, there is a real risk that private extension, NGO development, CBO/farmer organizational capacity-building, and technical implementers will create a labyrinth of organizational complexity in the field. Widespread vesting in the District planning and oversight can both reduce confusion of responsibility and enhance sustainability.

- *Formulated plans mean nothing if they are not implemented.* The gap (real or perceived) between plans and implementation can be reduced or eliminated by linking them as two points on a continuum. With COBS, plans are in place and people are ready to go, but resources are perceived as limited, in part because of expectations for implementation were seen as sequential and not integrated in an ongoing manner with a funding and implementation rationale. This dichotomy can be minimized by creating a sense of continuity as programming moves from COBS to SO7 and from the ARD contract to a series of bridging actions to a set of new contractors and grantees.
- *Respecting the role of government paves the way for government to participate in development as a partner.* Readiness to link with civil society and the private sector to create partnerships was demonstrated in the SEAP pilots. In some respects, Subcounty and Parish government is more a CBO than a government entity, and gives rise to programming concerns. Should, for example, SEAP implementation target established formal NGOs, or look for more encompassing CBOs at the grass-roots level to implement actions identified through participatory processes? Pilot-project implementation suggests scope for innovative partnerships where government and CBOs acting together can minimize or at least reduce the need for and cost of intermediary NGOs. With performance-based programming, using Parish and Sub-county government could offer an efficient means for achieving changes in resource management practices that are consistent with improved rural livelihoods.
- *Continuity is important to achieving E/NR management results.* One of the reasons COBS Support Project was able to catalyze institutional change so widely is because the Project team was able to build on existing momentum, such as identification of best practices for the DEAP planning process, APE efforts to improve management of PAs by strengthening planning, field efforts to identify promising technologies, and organizational arrangements. Follow-on activities should look for ways to bring out continuity by building linking activities to the plans, vision, and institutions that developed momentum under ARD–COBS and that continue to operate in western Uganda. Some specifics are mentioned above and under the specific discussions of results modules.
- *Scale interventions to appropriate level of community/landscape/administrative organization.* Consider “special-use Districts.” UWA should call a donors conference to coordinate otherwise “sectorized” interventions in and around PAs. The landscape concept remains valid but not necessarily compatible with administrative boundaries. PA management is working operationally with groupings around the parks. The project’s LTF defined a number of issues that transcend local concern. SO7 activities will encounter its own set of concerns, implying ongoing need for rethinking geographic units.

- *Leveraging the cross-cutting characteristic of E/NR management accelerates change through mainstreaming.* Action plans under the Project linked environment with other sectors such as agricultural production, fisheries, forestry, health, and sanitation. When possible, future development programming should link activities intended to increase incomes through sustainable use of natural resources with ongoing efforts to achieve multisectoral planning. Environment is not a “luxury” but an essential component of sustainable livelihoods. Although seemingly obvious, with a shift in focus to economic returns, attention to the integrated nature of environment and related institutional programming issues could become lost. Technologies that provide quick economic returns such as an improved maize package could provide the stimulus to include attention to soil erosion and fertility management that enhances sustainability but whose time frame and investment returns might have otherwise required direct subsidy.

**APPENDIX I:**  
**DOCUMENTS CONSULTED**  
**DOCUMENT LIST; EVALUATION TEAM**

Author	Date/Period	Title
Ian Deshmukh	99 - 02	First to eleventh Quarterly Reports
	01	Mid-Project Report
	99 - 02	First to third Annual Work Plans
	02	Performance Monitoring Plan (unapproved, for information, only)
Dan Taylor	Feb.–Apr. 00	Queen Elizabeth Protected Area Management Implementation. First Consultancy
Dan Taylor	Oct.–Dec. 02	Queen Elizabeth Protected Area Management Implementation. Second Consultancy
Sandra Cooper	July-Aug. 00	Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Mission
Sandra Cooper	Mar. 02	EIA Capacity-Building 2001
Sandra Cooper	July 02	EIA Capacity-Building April – May 2002
Terry Bergdall	Aug.-Sep. 00	ECOTRUST Board Of Trustees Planning Workshop And Follow-Up
Terry Bergdall	Nov. 00	ECOTRUST Strategic Planning And Staff Orientation
Richard Lamprey	June 00-July 01	Protected Area Management Planning
Andrew Roberts	Sep. 00-July 01	Murchison Falls Conservation Area General Management Plan: Landscape Architect/Site Planning Support
Clive Lightfoot & Simons Okalebo	Feb. 01	Report On A Learning Process For Developing Guidelines On Vision Based Sub-County Environmental Action Planning
Robert Russell	Mar.-Dec. 01	Technical Assistance, Institution Building At ECOTRUST
Isaac Kapalaga	Apr. 01	Institutional Support To ECOTRUST
George Ayee	July-Aug. 01	ECOTRUST: Development Of Business Plan
Darryl Kuhnle	Mar.-May 01	Increasing Public Knowledge And Participation In Natural Resources Conservation
Darryl Kuhnle	Aug. 01	Public Information And Education Action Plan
Karen Menczer	May 01	USAID/Uganda Integrated Strategic Plan. Environmental Threats and Opportunities Assessment. Part 2 USAID Program Impact on Environmental Sustainability, Tropical Forests and Biodiversity (FAA 17/118/119)
Karen Menczer	May-July 01	ARD Support To Queen Elizabeth Protected Area Annual Operations Plan 2001/2
Foodnet/IITA	January 02	Evaluating the Market Opportunities for Shea nut processed products in Uganda
John Ogwang	March 02	A Monitoring And Evaluation Scheme For Environment Action Plans: Districts Of Bushenyi, Kisoro, Rukun-giri And Kanungu
Yakobo Moyini	March 02	Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Sectoral Guidelines for Wildlife Management in Uganda
C.D. Langoya	March 02	Rubanga Forest, Lake Mburo National Park. Ecotourism Concept Plan
John Burton	May-June 02	Land Trust Program at ECOTRUST

<b>OTHER TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS</b>		
Alex Muhweezi	Sep. 00	(Draft) DEAP Process Manual
	02	Draft DEAPs (4 Districts)
	01	Sample PEAPs and SEAPs
Bart Young	Apr. 00	Uganda Wildlife Authority. General Management Plan Process Manual (2000 version)
UWA	June 02	Wildlife EIA Guidelines (final draft)
UWA	Sep. 00	QE General Management Plan
UWA	July 02	MF GMP
UWA	July 02	Draft Lake Mburo GMP
Sandra Cooper	02	EIA Manual (final draft)
	01	EIA In-service Training materials
	02	PEAT Training manual and posters
<b>CONTRACT/USAID DOCUMENTS</b>		
USAID	Sep. 99	TO Statement of Work
ARD	July 99	ARD proposal (which is Attachment I to original SoW)
USAID	Mar. 02	Revised TO SoW
USAID	June 97	USAID SO2 Program
USAID	Aug. 97	GoU/USG SOAg
USAID	June 01	New Mission Integrated Strategic Plan

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## **APPENDIX 2:**

### **LIST OF PERSONS CONTACTED**

#### *Kampala*

#### **USAID**

Anne Fleuret, Acting Program Officer/Monitoring and Evaluation Officer  
Greg Booth, COBS Support Project CTO Environment and Natural Resources Advisor  
Nightingale Natumo, SO2 and SO7  
Dan Opio, Program Advisor

#### **COBS SUPPORT PROJECT**

Ian Deshmukh, ARD Chief of Party  
Tom Blomley, CARE-Uganda, Conservation and Development Sector Manager  
J.R. Kamugisha, CARE/Environmental Planning TA  
Ms. Christina Sempebwa, Program Coordinator, ARD  
Richard Lamprey, ARD UWA TA  
Andrew Roberts, ARD UWA TA  
Marion T Kyomuhendo, Public Information and Education TA

#### **UWA**

Dr Arthur Mugisha, Executive Director  
Mr. Moses Mapesa Wafula, Deputy Director/Field Operations  
Mr. Sam Mwandha, Planning and EIA Coordinator  
Apophia Atukunda, DPMR  
Mr. Grace Waiswa, UWA Planning Unit  
Ms. Jane Bemigisha, UWAPU

#### **NEMA**

Dr. Henry Aryamanya-Mugisha, Executive Director  
Dr. Emmanuel Tugume Beraho, District Support Officer  
Mr. Charles Akol, Director District Support Coordinator and Public Education  
Justine Ecaat, Environmental Impact Assessment Specialist  
Ms. Margaret Lwanga, Gender Specialist

#### **ECOTRUST**

Dr Joy Tukahirwa, Executive Director  
Robinah Takwaza, Finance and Administrative Manager

#### **OTHER**

Isaac Kapalaga, SPEED Contracts Manager  
Eng. Charles Drazu, Program Coordinator, Royal Netherlands Embassy  
Asimwe Martine, CARE QEPA

**Districts and Protected Areas****KISORO DISTRICT**

Mr. Abdallah Kiganda, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
Mr. Paul Musamali, CARE DEAP/C  
Mr. William Mugisha, District Environment Officer  
Mr. Zakary Bahizi, District Agricultural Officer (DAO) and Vice Chairperson, DEAP District Task Force (DTF)

**KISORO DISTRICT DEAP, PEAT, PEAP FACILITATORS**

Charles Byiringiro, Assistant Agricultural Officer (AAO)  
Henry Nyirimanzi, ACDO  
Dr. Bernard Sibyomu, Veterinary Officer (VO)  
Callisto Mpozembizi, ACDO Grade I  
John Hatega, Agricultural Officer (AO)  
Emmy Kalekezi, ACDO  
Balthazar Bungutsiki, Agricultural Officer (AO)  
Herbert Kwizera, Assistant Veterinary Officer (AVO)  
Zachary Bahizi, District Production and Natural resource Management coordinator.  
Kizara George, Sub-county Chief  
Eva Senzira, ACDO  
Joseline Bigirimana, ACDO  
E. Nkuriliye, AVO  
D. Nkeramugabe, Chairperson LC3  
Kosaro Cyimanizanye, LC1 Chairman  
Pilot Project Participants Group

**KABALE DISTRICT**

Dr. Brima Fatorma, Project Manager/Coordinator Africare Food Security Initiative  
James Bariyanga, AFRICARE Monitoring and Evaluation Officer  
Charles Komachec, Roads Engineer AFRICARE Kabale  
Mr. Sam Katehangwa, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)  
Mr. James Kasimbabzi, District Production and Environment Coordinator  
Ms. Charity Joy Bwiza, Program Manager, Mgahinga and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest Conservation Trust  
Mr. Tom Sengalama, Program Officer, Mgahinga and Bwindi Impenetrable Forest Conservation Trust (MBIFCT).

**Rukingiri District**

Mr. Gershom Tumushabe, Production Coordinator and Chairman DTF  
Mr. Richard Muzimbwe, Ag. District Environment Officer

Robert Ocatre, CARE DEAP/C

### **KANUNGU DISTRICT**

Peter Mugisha, District Speaker  
Dr. Tumwesigye, District Veterinary Officer  
Tumwesigye Kenneth: Ass. Community development Officer  
Muhonja Josephat, Ass. Fisheries Officer  
Assembly, DEAP Approval  
PEAT Group

### **BUSHENYI DISTRICT OFFICIALS**

Mr. Patrick Musiime, CARE DEAP/C  
Dr. Amon Rwabwiiso, Chairman DTF  
Mr. William Tayebwa, District Environment Officer  
Mr. Levi Etwodu, District Forestry Officer  
Tibesigwa Freddie, PEAT Facilitator  
Dr. Nankunda Apollo, Veterinary Officer  
Kamwezi Patrick, AO  
Tumuhimbise Gordon, Entomologist  
Muganda Henry, AO  
Rubega D.B., AO

### **BUSHENYI DISTRICT: KABWOHE/ITENDERO TOWN COUNCIL OFFICIALS**

Rev. Ben Mugarura, Town Clerck, Kabwohe/Itendero Town Council  
Mr. Enock Nsimeki, Chairman, RUASA  
Byarugaba C.N. , Trainner RUASA  
Kimartwa L, Trainner RUASA  
Himbisa Joshua, Secretary RUASA  
Mparana James, BUDIFA Chairman and Trainer  
Byamugisha Eliasaph, BUDIFA Trainer

### **Queen Elizabeth National Park/Protected Area**

Mr. Nuwe John Bosco, Chief Park Warden  
Ms. Namakula Gertrude, Community Conservation Warden  
Denis Katunguka, Warden, Law Enforcement  
Mr. Patrick Tushabe, Warden Tourism

### **LAKE MBURO NATIONAL PARK**

Mr. Edward Asalu, Senior Warden in charge  
Mr. Christopher Musumba, Community Conservation Warden/Law Enforcement.  
Mr. Genesis Okello, Ranger

Warden Tourism  
Moses, Ranger/Guide

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## **APPENDIX 3:**

### **PFE SCOPE OF WORK**

#### **STATEMENT OF WORK**

##### **COBS SUPPORT PROJECT – FINAL EVALUATION**

*Task Order No. 800 under the USAID – ARD Indefinite Quantity Contract OUT-LAG-I-800-99-00013-00, Biodiversity and Sustainable Forestry (BIOFOR).*

#### **Rationale**

This Project final evaluation (PFE) of the “Conserve Biodiversity for Sustainable Development” (COBS) Support Project is necessary for the following reasons:

- a. It is the only opportunity for a comprehensive, independent and external assessment of project achievements and impact;
- b. It will provide important best practices and lessons learned that can be applied to design and implementation of new USAID–Uganda activities under its new Integrated Strategic Plan.

#### **Background**

The Uganda COBS program is a collaborative effort of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Government of the Republic of Uganda (GoU). An inter-government program-specific bilateral Strategic Objective Grant Agreement governs broad aspects of program implementation. ARD, Inc. is contracted by USAID - Uganda to assist in implementation of COBS (the COBS Support Project, or ARD–COBS). ARD’s subcontractor for the Task Order (TO) is CARE-Uganda. The TO, for the three year activity, was signed on 30 September, 1999. ARD and CARE have used an integrated technical implementation approach, rather than separating activities.

The overall COBS program coincides with the USAID-Kampala Second Strategic Objective (SO2): *Critical ecosystems conserved to sustain biological diversity and to enhance benefits to society*. In addition to the USAID Mission, and ARD as an institutional contractor, many other organizations are involved in attaining SO2. Among these, as an ARD–COBS collaborator and beneficiary, is the Environmental Conservation Trust of Uganda (ECOTRUST) which manages a series of grants, mainly to non-government organizations, carrying out activities related to SO2. USAID’s new Integrated Strategic Plan (ISP), 2002 – 2007, became operational in late 2001. Environment, natural resources and biodiversity are integrated into a new Strategic Objective (SO7): *Expanded sustainable economic opportunities for rural sector growth*. While COBS remains under the SO2 umbrella, USAID expects SO2 activities to lead towards achievement of SO7 as well. SO2 and relevant SO7 results are summarized in Appendix 1.

In GoU, the main ARD–COBS partners are the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) and local government in the Districts of Bushenyi, Kanungu, Rukungiri and Kisoro. However, the ultimate beneficiaries are expected to

be the flora, fauna and ecological processes of Uganda, and people living in and around critical ecosystems.

Appendix 2 outlines the Statement of Work for the TO which was signed on 30 September 1999 and is expected to terminate on 30 September 2002. A significant modification to the TO was signed in March 2002. Prior to that, the original TO SoW was formally operational. However, as early as January 2000, USAID requested a significant “re-focusing” of ARD-COBS. Several program elements were removed or modified as summarized in Appendix 2. Substance and progress of this refocusing are described by ARD in quarterly progress reports and summarized in a Mid-Project report of July 2001. The final TO modification also incorporated a budget cut from \$7 million to \$5.2 million, of which ARD was notified in October 2001.

### **Evaluation questions and issues**

The team should assess the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of project interventions and whether alternative approaches may have been more effective. If alternative approaches are suggested, the team should indicate which would have been compatible with contractual constraints, and which would have needed different contractual parameters.

The team should:

- a) focus on the most pertinent issues which evaluate contractor performance and which reveal useful lessons learnt of value to future programming;
- b) identify those outputs/results/impacts which are clearly attributable to contractor activities;
- c) identify, with reasons, significant activities (if any) which the contractor was unable to undertake or complete.

USAID’s guidelines for evaluations (ADS 203) emphasizes that a small number of key questions or specific issues are addressed using empirical evidence. It is the contractor’s responsibility to provide a descriptive project Final Report. The evaluation team report should, therefore, focus on the following four questions. The accompanying narratives are indicative of broad issues and activities which should be evaluated. The PFE should evaluate additional issues as they arise which are relevant to answering the four primary questions.

### **What did the COBS Support Project achieve?**

Appendices 1 and 2 outline expected results at the Mission level, and Results and outputs at the project level, respectively. The PFE will:

- Estimate project achievements quantitatively and qualitatively against these expectations.
- Assess the extent to which project implementation actions are evident on the ground as a result of direct project activities, direct beneficiary, or other partner actions.
- Assess the extent to which biodiversity, environment and natural resource and human development conditions are improved/likely to be improved by project activities.

UWA and local governments received substantial technical, capacity-building and financial assistance. NEMA has received indirect support in relationship to its mandate for oversight of DEAPs and in EIA capacity-building. ECOTRUST has received substantial technical assistance

in accomplishing its transition from USAID's SO2 Grant Management Unit. The USAID Mission has also requested and received technical assistance under Results Module 5 (RM4 after the TO modification – see Appendix 2). The PFE will assess to what extent these organizations are satisfied with the support received.

**What did the COBS Support Project fail to achieve?**

The PFE will identify which results and outputs will not, or are unlikely to, be achieved, and analyze constraints and probable causes. The team will indicate which of these causes and constraints were beyond control of the contractor, or where a different approach (within project resources) may have been more effective.

**What is the impact and sustainability of COBS Support Project achievements?**

ARD-COBS has invested in developing certain environment/natural resources planning and plan-implementation mechanisms in UWA and, in collaboration with NEMA, local government. The PFE will assess whether human and financial resources to continue this planning and plan implementation are available and likely to be mobilized.

The project has built capacity in UWA for protected areas planning and plan implementation. Local government has similarly received support in action planning, environmental mainstreaming, environmental awareness and EIA. The PFE will assess effectiveness of the approaches used to capacity-building and whether beneficiaries are using the skills and knowledge they have gained.

**What are the key lessons learned that USAID can build on?**

USAID's new ISP integrates environment and economic growth programs in SO7. At least one proposed activity is expected to focus in western Uganda in areas which overlap with where many ARD-COBS activities are focused. The PFE will assess what can be learned from the ARD-COBS approach and activities which is applicable to SO7 and broader USAID programming.

**Methods**

1. Review relevant project documentation including progress reports, annual work plans, TO SOWs (including the ARD proposal), and consultant reports, and any additional documentation made available by ARD, USAID and other partners.
2. Consult with USAID Mission staff to gather relevant views and information on the major evaluation questions.
3. Consult with the ARD and CARE implementation team to gather relevant views and information on the major evaluation questions.
4. Consult with the major Ugandan project beneficiaries to gather relevant views and information on the major evaluation questions. Primary contacts in this respect are UWA (headquarters and field), NEMA, District local government (from Parish to District level) and ECOTRUST. However, the team should endeavor to contact "secondary partners" such as NGOs and other relevant projects, who may not be direct beneficiaries, but who have intersected with ARD-COBS.

5. Make at least one field visit to assess project activities in UWA Protected Areas and local governments in southwestern Uganda.
6. As time allows, attend any significant project implementation events/activities that occur during the evaluation. During such events (if any) the team should take the opportunity to consult project partners on evaluation questions and issues.

**Deliverables**

1. In consultation with USAID and ARD, provide a schedule and work plan for the evaluation within three days of the team assembling in Kampala. The work plan will identify joint and individual tasks for the team members and methods to be used to gather information. This work plan must be agreed with USAID before proceeding further.
2. A first draft final report, with major findings and conclusions presented orally and in writing to USAID and ARD-COBS at least four days prior to departure of the evaluation team leader.
3. A complete draft final report to an agreed format, incorporating feedback from major stakeholders prior to departure of the evaluation team leader, submitted simultaneously to USAID and ARD. The final report should be concise and focused, bearing in mind guidance in Section 3 above.
4. A final report, incorporating any changes in response to written comments from USAID and ARD, submitted by the PFE team leader within one week of receiving such comments.

**Personnel, timing and level of effort**

The PFE will be conducted by a three person team, comprising a Team Leader and two Team Members. The Team Leader will have experience in USAID results-based programming, performance M&Es. The team as a whole will have technical expertise in the following areas:

- Biodiversity conservation;
- Protected areas planning and management;
- Environmental and natural resources planning and management;
- Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Decentralized governance;
- Institutional development and capacity-building;
- Participatory planning;
- Knowledge of Uganda's environment and natural resources institutional and policy framework.

The evaluation is scheduled for approximately four weeks during the period 20 July -31 August 2002. Level of effort for the Team Leader is 26 working days (inclusive of international travel), and 20 days for each Team Member.

**Roles, responsibilities and administration**

Although contracted by ARD under the COBS Support Project TO, USAID–Uganda has primary oversight responsibility of the evaluation team and process. The Uganda Mission will designate the relevant officials to provide technical oversight, guidance and to define reporting requirements. The USAID Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) will provide day-to-day technical oversight of the PFE team in consultation with the ARD–COBS Chief of Party.

The Evaluation Team Leader is responsible for team coordination and performance, and for ensuring timeliness and quality of deliverables.

ARD will provide contractual oversight and support for international and local travel and logistics.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### ***USAID RESULTS FRAMEWORK***

ARD as an institutional contractor contributes to USAID's overall environmental program articulated under the Uganda Mission's Strategic Objective 2 (SO2): *Critical ecosystems conserved to sustain biological diversity and to enhance benefits to society*. Under ARD's Statement of Work, the contractor contributes to three primary "Intermediate Results" (IRs), each with several second level IRs, as follows.

IR 2.1 Critical ecosystems managed to ensure biological integrity.

IR 2.1.1 Protected areas management plans implemented.

IR 2.1.2 Community-level resource use agreements implemented.

IR 2.1.3 Ecologically sound private sector investments undertaken.

IR 2.2 Pressure on critical ecosystems reduced.

IR 2.2.1 Increased dependence on sustainable resource use systems.

IR 2.2.2 Population pressure on environment mitigated.

IR 2.3 Supportive framework for conservation and sustainable development maintained.

IR 2.3.1 NEAP [*National Environment Action Plan*] objectives strategically important for conservation of critical ecosystems implemented.

IR 2.3.2 Knowledge base improved to better guide natural resources management policy decisions.

IR 2.3.3 Role of civil society in natural resources management policy formulation increased.

IR 2.3.4 Sectoral laws enacted in consultation with lead agencies.

IR 2.3.5 Political leadership mobilized in support of environmental management.

IR 2.3.2-5.1 Public awareness in support of conservation and sustainable development increased.

At the level of USAID's country program each IR has a series of indicators measuring success towards achieving SO2. It is important to note that other projects and organizations are involved in implementing the COBS/SO2 program, and they contribute to achievement of the IRs, in addition to ARD-COBS.

During 2001 USAID Uganda developed a *new Integrated Strategic Plan*. New environment and natural resources activities fall under Strategic Objective 7 (SO7): *Expanded sustainable eco-*

*conomic opportunities for rural sector growth.* Although ARD–COBS remains under the SO2 umbrella, the project addresses several SO7 IRs, most notably:

IR 7.2.1 Improved utilization of selected critical landscapes.

IR 7.2.3 Increased provision of private and public sector support services.

IR 7.3.1 Increased capacity of local producer and community-based organizations to manage and market productive assets.

IR 7.4.3 Effective advocacy for environmental and natural resource policies.

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## **APPENDIX 2 COBS Support Project**

### **Summary of Statements of Work**

These summaries are provided to the PFE Team as initial background to the main activities of the COBS Support Project and the Evaluation SoW. The full SoWs (including ARD's original proposal, which serves as Attachment 1 to the original SoW) will be provided to the team for review and analysis.

The original SoW with its attachment was technically operational from September 1999 to March 2002. However, the Mission requested a "refocusing" exercise in January 2000 which eliminated several activities (including Results Module 3). A revised SoW (Modification No 2) reflecting the refocusing was drafted in April 2000, and additional changes were incorporated in December 2001 leading to a signed Modification No 2. in March 2002. The original ceiling price of approximately \$7 million reduced to approximately \$5.2 million in Modification No. 2.

Note that:

- a) Because of elimination of original Results Module 3, the numbering of equivalent RMs changes in Modification No. 2.
- b) In Modification No. 2, ARD's original proposal no longer serves as an attachment to the SoW.
- c) Modification 1 to the TO in 2001 was provision of incremental funding, only.

#### **A. Summary of Results Expected: Original Task Order for Core Program Support to USAID–Uganda So2**

*Results Module No. 1: "Rationalizing Management of Biodiversity Conservation in Protected Areas."*

##### ***Module Goal Statement***

**Increase UWA's long-term planning and management capabilities through assistance to develop and implement GMPs for selected protected areas.**

##### ***Results to be Achieved***

The following key results/targets are illustrative and intended to guide approaches and activities under this module. The contractor's proposal dated 19 July 99 is included as Attachment 1

to this SOW and contains the results/targets and proposed approach that the Contractor shall be held accountable for.

1. UWA Planning Unit develops GMPs for two Priority Protected Areas.
2. Number of UWA Protected Areas with current GMPs increased from 8 (1998) to 15 (2001).
3. Percentage of UWA Protected Areas with capacity to develop annual operations plans increased to 100%.
4. Increased number of examples where planning used by UWA Board of Trustees, headquarters, and field management to inform protected areas management decisions.

***Results Module No. 2: "Environmental Planning and Management in Biodiverse Landscapes/Districts."***

***Module Goal Statement***

**Increase capacity of selected Districts to develop and implement District Environment Action Plans as an integral part of District-level development planning and implementation.**

***Expected Results***

The following key results/targets are illustrative and intended to guide approaches and activities under this module. The Contractor's proposal dated 19 July 99 is included as Attachment 1 to this SOW and the Contractor shall be held accountable for the results/targets contained therein.

1. DEAPs developed in 5 Districts.
2. Number of Districts where development activities are guided by environmentally sound DEAPs/DDPs increased from 2 (1998) to 10 (2001). [Note: the intent of this result/target is that local development occurs with full consideration of the effects of the environment. As such, the contractor should define how it will determine whether or not District development activities are being appropriately guided by DEAPs/DDPs].

***Results Module No. 3: "Institutional Support and Capacity-Building for Enhanced Cross-Sectoral Environmental Management and Biodiversity Conservation: Environmental Liaison Units."***

***Module Goal Statement***

**Improve ELU capacity to ensure that lead agency-level policies, planning and activities are in accordance and compliance with the NEAP and environmental legislation.**

***Result to be Achieved***

The following key results/targets are illustrative and intended to guide approaches and activities under this module. The Contractor's proposal dated 19 July 99 is included as attachment 1 and therein are the results/targets for which the Contractor will be held accountable for under this SOW.

1. Number of effective ELUs increased from 0 (1998) to 14 (2001) [Note: “Effective” should be defined by the contractor in terms of factors such as: staffing; training; equipment; and degrees of the ELU agency/ministry’s compliance with environmental policy and legislation].
2. Increased number of examples where environmental concerns integrated into sectoral policies, planning and activity implementation in accordance with environmental legislation.

***Results Module No. 4: “Capacity Building for Environmental Review and Assessment.”***

***Module Goal Statement***

**Increase institutional capacity and collaboration for all aspects of environmental assessment, review and monitoring.**

***Results to be Achieved***

The following key results/targets are illustrative and intended to guide approaches and activities under this module. The Contractor’s proposal dated 19 July 99 is attachment 1 to this SOW and contains the results/targets and proposed approach that the Contractor shall be held accountable for during performance of this SOW.

1. Increased consideration of environmental issues in development process through use of environmental assessment by NEMA and other lead agencies (Annual increase in number of quality EIAs inform the development process). [Note: the intent of this result/target is that environmental review and assessment increasingly informs sectoral and local development. A “quality” EIA is compliant with NEMA’s approved EIA guidelines and standards and any appropriate sectoral guidelines. An EIA informs the development process if it is approved and utilized by the relevant development authority].
2. Thirty DEOs able to conduct environmental screening; determine the need for EIA; ensure compliance with EIA guidelines and regulations; and ensure compliance with mitigation measures.
3. Fourteen ELUs able to conduct environmental screening; determine the need for EIA; ensure compliance with EIA guidelines and regulations; and ensure compliance with mitigation measures.
4. Environmental guidelines developed, approved and implemented for 7 key sectors.

***Results Module 5: “Special Biodiversity Support Activities.”***

***Module Goal Statement***

**Provide technical and program support to activities that support results defined under the SO2 Program (and not otherwise provided for as part of other results modules or SO2 Program activities).**

***Results to be Achieved***

Given the flexibility inherent in this module, no results are provided. Actual results to be achieved will be targeted as SO2/COBS Program needs are identified.

***Results Module 6: “COBS Program Management and Coordination******Module Goal Statement***

**Ensure that the overall SO2 Program remains “on-track” towards desired results by supporting the overall effort of the SO2 Teams in addressing the Strategic Objective, through providing support to the design, implementation, coordination, and monitoring of all SO2 Program activities and results.**

***Results to be Achieved***

The following key results/targets are illustrative and intended to guide approaches and activities under this module. The Contractor’s proposal dated 19 July 99 is Attachment 1 to this SOW and contained therein are the results/targets and proposed approach for which the Contractor will be held accountable for during performance of this SOW.

1. Detailed plan, first-year work plan and performance monitoring plan for overall Core Program Support Activity prepared and submitted to USAID for approval within 60 days of Task Order award.
2. Commodities and logistical support provided in support of Contractor-managed activities.
3. Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) for SO2/COBS Program guides results-based management of SO2 Program.
4. SO2/COBS Program remains on track in achieving results as specified in PMP.

**B. SUMMARY OF RESULTS AND OUTPUTS EXPECTED: MODIFICATION 2 OF THE TASK ORDER FOR CORE PROGRAM SUPPORT TO USAID-UGANDA SO2*****Results Module 1: Management of Biodiversity Conservation in Protected Areas******Module Goal Statement.***

***Increase UWA’s long-term planning and management capabilities through assistance to develop and implement GMPs for selected protected areas.***

**Results to be achieved.** ARD will achieve results under two broad headings as follows: 1) Management Planning, and 2) Management Plan Implementation.

**Results**

1. UWA Planning Unit develops GMPs for four priority Protected Areas – Murchison Falls NP, Bugungu and Karuma WRs and Lake Mburo NP.

2. A procedure for annual operations planning (AOP) is developed, tested and utilized to guide management decisions and allocations of resources in PAs with and without GMPs.

### **Outputs**

- Wildlife sectoral guidelines for EIA
- Revised PA management planning process and manual actively applied by UWA
- A cadre of UWA planning staff capable of defining, leading and managing the PA Management Plan process
- Revised PA management planning process and format manual, including standardized costing procedures and design standards actively applied by UWA.
- Annual Operation Plan formats to guide the allocation, monitoring and reporting of resources used in managing select PAs
- Implementation of selected aspects of the Queen Elizabeth GMP in the area of visitor services.

### **Results Module 2: *Environmental Planning and Management in Biodiverse Landscapes/Districts***

#### ***Module Goal Statement.***

*Increase capacity of local District councils and rural communities to develop and implement Environmental Action Plans to conserve and protect natural resources as an integral part of District-level development.*

#### **Results to be achieved.**

ARD will achieve results under three broad headings as follows: 1) Review and Streamlining of the DEAP Process, 2) Preparation of DEAPs, and 3) Implementation of EAPs in Critical Ecosystems. In particular, this Task Order notes the following key results/targets as desired outcomes.

### **Results**

1. DEAPs developed in four (4) Districts.
2. EAP implementation active in at least four (4) Districts, with activities of at least 10 SEAPs under implementation.
3. System in place and capacity built in local government for M&E of DEAP implementation.
4. Public Information and Education (PIE) campaign in Environment and Natural Resource Management (ENRM). This will promote conservation and sustainable utilization of Uganda's diverse natural endowments to stem their rapid deterioration evident throughout the country. Initial targeting, design and dissemination of awareness materials will be focused in the DEAP Districts with links to the relevant ENRM campaigns of appropriate government and private sector trade organizations that depend upon and promote improved environmental management (for example, UWA, Wetlands Program, Forestry Authority, Fisheries Department, NEMA, Uganda Fish Processors and Exporters Ass'n, Ass'n of Uganda Tour Operators). The strategy will provide a long-term sustainability plan for the PIE activity.

5. An inter-District (“landscape”) grouping is established of local government officials and partners representing the four COBS Support target Districts, which exchanges experience and information, and acts as an advocacy group in environment and natural resources issues in southwest Uganda.

### **Outputs**

- Revised DEAP process manual that includes relevant local council (e.g., Subcounty) action planning guidelines.
- PEAPs, SEAPs and DEAPs produced and submitted for approval in all target Districts.
- Linkages established and local capacity built to enable local authorities responsible for EAP implementation to connect with potential sources of support such as “internally” generated revenue (local taxes), PMA non-sectoral conditional grants and other donor/NGO development funds.
- A series of lessons-learned documents and capacity building sessions developed and delivered in collaboration with the USAID-funded EPED project that explain and extend the participatory EAP process including the demonstration of results.
- A pilot process for developing and enforcing agreements for the management of natural resources held under control of local authorities.

### **Results Module 3: *Capacity-Building and Institutional Support: Environmental Assessment and Environmental Review***

#### ***Module Goal Statement:***

*The intent of this Results Module is to ensure that environmental review and assessment are mainstreamed in sectoral and local development. Two goals are specific to this Results Module:*

1. *Increased institutional capacity of selected Districts to incorporate environmental assessment, review and monitoring in development plans, policies and actions.*
2. *Increased capacity and effectiveness of EA/EIA training and education delivery mechanisms in support of EA and its incorporation into District and national management agendas.*

#### **Results to be achieved:**

ARD will achieve results under three broad headings as follows: 1) Formal EA/EIA Training Program, 2) Environmental Management Public Awareness, and 3) Other EA/EIA Support Activities. In particular, this Task Order notes the following key results/targets as desired outcomes.

### **Results**

1. Increased use of environmental review and assessment in the local development process.
2. An increase in the number of EIAs that are compliant with NEMA’s approved national EIA guidelines and any appropriate sectoral guidelines.

3. At least 80 Local Government officials and officers (a combination of representatives from District Executive Committees; Production & Environment Secretaries; District technical officers representing such fields as environment, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, planners, water, sanitation and engineering; and extension advisors, and local representatives of UWA, local NGOs and other appropriate private sector organizations) with the capacity to evaluate development activities for their environmental soundness and for their compliance with the NES. This requires a working knowledge of the NES and with EIA guidelines and regulations. Further, these officials must be able to conduct environmental screening, evaluate proposed developments for their environmental impacts and judge the effectiveness proposed mitigation measures.
4. Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines developed and approved for implementation in the wildlife sector. This will include the management of wildlife inside and outside the UWA estate and UWA's management activities within its Protected Area estate.

### **Outputs**

- In-service EIA training program for local government officials using a comprehensive case study approach to provide an understanding of national environmental regulations and standards, environmental impacts, monitoring and mitigation and their application to local rural development. The training will transfer sufficient EIA skills and knowledge to enable trainees to monitor the conduct of EIAs and to review the Environmental Impact Statements (EIS).
- A training of training program whereby a basic understanding of basic environmental processes that sustain rural economies and the importance of environmental management are transmitted to ordinary rural producers and community members.
- An environmental manual for public sector officers that will serve as a ready EIA reference.
- A framework for testing and certifying private sector EIA practitioners established and approved by NEMA.

### **Results Module 4: *Special Biodiversity Support Activities***

#### ***Module Goal Statement:***

***Provide technical and program support to activities that support results defined under the SO2 Program (and not otherwise provided for as part of other results modules or SO2 Program activities).***

#### **Results to be achieved:**

Given the flexibility inherent in this module, no results are provided. Actual results to be achieved will be targeted as SO2/COBS Program needs are identified.

**Module No. 5: Activity Coordination and Administration**

*This is not a Results Module in the sense of 1-4 above. Rather, it addresses project management functions. ARD's Project Management Unit (PMU) will administer the project and provide technical input to deliver the results desired under this modified Task Order.*

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**APPENDIX 4:  
WORK PLAN AND SCHEDULE**

**CONSERVE BIODIVERSITY FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (COBS):**

**FINAL EVALUATION WORKPLAN**

**August 2, 2002**

**ARD Final Evaluation Team  
Dr. Frederick Sowers, Team Leader  
Frank Muhereza  
Monica Kaporiri**

## **I. Evaluation Approach and Methodology**

The Uganda COBS program is a collaborative effort of the Government of the Republic of Uganda and the United States Agency for International Development. Implementation of the program is spearheaded through a technical support contract to ARD Inc who in turn has sub-contracted with CARE-Uganda to assist in implementation especially of field-based activity. ARD and CARE have unified their efforts which are directed from a central Program Management Unit (PMU). Although the project-funded Evaluation Team will work closely with the PMU to coordinate and facilitate its activities, the evaluation represents a comprehensive, independent external assessment of the project achievements.

The primary client for the evaluation is USAID/Kampala. Because the COBS project per se is moving toward close-out, the evaluation will pay particular attention to documenting best practices and lessons learned and interpreting these with respect to the recently completed USAID Strategic Plan, 2002-2007. During the implementation of COBS, USAID's strategic focus has shifted from institutional capacity development toward a more private sector growth and poverty alleviation strategy. COBS was implemented under the previous strategic plan and was the primary mechanism to achieve SO2, *Critical ecosystems conserved to sustain biodiversity and to enhance benefits to society*. Many of the prior SO2 results have been subsumed under the current strategic plan's SO7, *Expanded sustainable economic opportunities for rural sector growth*.

The Evaluation Approach follows current USAID guidance in the sense that the team views evaluation as a collaborative activity that is intended to enhance the effectiveness of program implementation by responding to specific management needs, which in this case are centered on extracting guidance in elaborating and implementing activities under the new strategy's SO7. COBS has been a comprehensive institutional support project and has addressed capacity issues particularly for improved planning in a number of mostly-government organizations. It has done so, in many cases, using partnerships and other indirect means. Given the limited time and personnel of the evaluation, the team's approach is to use an iterative methodology to refine data collection increasingly around a subset of questions and issues that seem most pertinent to the management needs of the primary client. The evaluation, therefore, will 1) document achievements and shortcomings against expectations as reflected in contracts, work plans and other programmatic documents; 2) examine evidence of impact and sustainability primarily to the degree that they create an enabling institutional environment for biodiversity conservation; and 3) to frame lessons learned from the ongoing COBS support in terms of the strategic refocusing under the new SO7 which shifts focus to economic growth but still includes environment.

The team will use a range of methods to collect the necessary information to accomplish the evaluation purposes. The work commences with a review of key documents to identify issues and carry out team assignments. The evaluation will use program documents to determine a

format for presentation of results; this will follow the core “results modules” (RMs) that have guided implementation and reporting. The first week will be spent reviewing these documents, arranging initial interviews with the key COBS staff and partners and with USAID. During this time an evaluation schedule and field visit itinerary are being prepared and provisional tasking for data collection and reporting will be undertaken.

The team will develop a field interview guide for information gathering at various levels. The methodology will follow a framework developed by the Institute for Cultural Affairs known as ORID. ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretive, and Decisional) is used to guide and focus conversations and understanding and will help individual consultants to harmonize data collection scope and methods whether using key informant, group interviews, direct observation and other information gathering techniques. The team does not anticipate using any formal survey or quantitative analysis techniques, but will rely on using multiple case studies and data triangulation to assure the accuracy and completeness of findings and analysis. Office interviews, field visits, ‘outsider’ perspectives, direct observation and secondary source material will all contribute to an increasingly complete composite for each of the key areas of project activity and thus of assessment. As the period of data collection comes to a close, the team will use a structured consensus building retreat to assure a single evaluation perspective, to identify information gaps, and to clarify areas of ambiguity.

The team will report its conclusions and recommendations/lessons learned with reference to the specific findings and analysis that led to them. Detailed recommendations for specific program modules This will enable the users of the evaluation results to better follow the evaluation rationale and make use of the overall work. As the work progresses, the team will engage in formal and informal information sharing to better incorporate perspectives of the program’s multiple stakeholders.

## **II. Evaluation Schedule**

### ***Overall Evaluation Schedule***

July 30 – August 3	Team Planning Meeting
	Introductory interviews with key institutions
	Document review and preparation of Evaluation Work plan
	Preparation of Field visit
August 4 – 11	Field visit to Southwestern Uganda (see detailed schedule)
August 12 – 17	Follow-up interviews with implementation partners
	Refinement of writing assignments/drafting of findings
	Internal team consensus building retreat

August 19 – 24 Preparation of initial draft report

Preparation and presentation of findings

Refinement of draft report based on written and oral feedback

Presentation of draft report

August 25 – Sept 7 Completion of Final Evaluation document

# **ARD-COBS FINAL EVALUATION TRAVEL SCHEDULE**

Day/Date	Accommodation	Activities/Meetings
<b>Sunday 4 August</b> <b>Travel to Kisoro</b>	Tourist Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review Field Interview Guidelines</li> </ul>
<b>Monday 5<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Kisoro District</b>	Tourist Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wetland pilot (farmers &amp; extension staff – latter coordinating pilots &amp; were EAP facilitators)</li> <li>CAO &amp; DTF</li> <li>LC2 &amp; LC3 EAP facilitators &amp; participants</li> <li>PEAT trainers and participants</li> <li>ECOTRUST DEAP project</li> </ul>
<b>Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup></b>	Park House Hotel (Ishaka)	<p>Morning – to Kabale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Africare, DTC/DTF, Bwindi Trust (max 3h) –team splits</li> </ul> <p>Lunch: Kabale (Anne Fleuret?)</p> <p>Afternoon – to Ishaka</p>
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Bushenyi District</b>	Mweya Lodge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Similar to Kisoro; may want to include Kichwamba and QEPA CC project en route to Mweya.</li> <li>To QEPA may meet staff in evening.</li> </ul>
<b>Thursday 8<sup>th</sup></b> <b>QEPA</b>	Park House Hotel (Ishaka)	<p>QEPA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GMP, AOP, Visitor center</li> </ul> <p>CPW Bosco (was @ Lake Mburo); LE warden Dennis was there for GMP – others tbd.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To Ishaka</li> </ul>
<b>Friday 9<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Rukungiri/</b> <b>Kanungu</b>	Stay in Rukungiri or Mbarara, depending on time	<p>Morning (early) to Rukungiri; team splits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Rukungiri meet LCV and CAO (needs 1 DTF member to work with team + selected activities as in Kisoro. <b>Need additional vehicle</b>)</li> <li>Savanna Hotel (Kanungu District). DEAP approval meeting</li> <li>To Rukungiri or Mbarara.</li> </ul>
<b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Lake Mburo</b>	Lake Mburo – tents or bandas. [If full return to Mbarara]	Lake Mburo NP; GMP. AOP; n.b. Warden in Charge was involved with Murchison GMP. Community User Agreement
<b>Sunday 11<sup>th</sup></b> <b>Return to KLA.</b>		Morning in LMNP if needed

### **III. Reporting**

As noted in the timetable, the evaluation team will report results first through an initial oral presentation, timed to approximately correspond with compilation of an initial draft document. The team would expect feedback both from the oral presentation and from an initial reading of the progress draft. Based on this feedback a final draft will be presented upon the team leader's departure. Any additional response to the draft evaluation will be incorporated into the final version of the report, which will be prepared, printed and presented to USAID by the contractor.

#### **DRAFT REPORT OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS**

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Executive Summary

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References

Appendices